INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

an analytical study

BIJAYANANDA KAR



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TO
NAMITA KAR

PREFACE

The *present volume comprises sixteen research* papers out of which fourteen are already published in reputed national and international sources. The papers *deal with various classical/ philosophical issues like lauguage, logic, truth, error, causality knowledge, freewill and determinism.* There are *also discussions regarding certain important epistemological as well as ontological points of view held by the classical Indian philosophers especially the Sāṁkhyāits and the Advaitins.* Furthermore, the socio-religious thoughts presented by contemporary prominent Indian thinkers like Sri Aurobindo and Gandhi have been discussed. The method of approach, advanced in these papers, has been mostly analytical and critical. While dealing with the above-mentioned issues, I have a firm conviction that the classical Indian philosopher, in so far as he philosophises, distinctly keeps himself away from any sort of religious orthodoxy. Indian philosophy has been presented not on the theological setting but rather on the plane of reason and logic. In that sense Indian philosophical pursuit has never been away from perennial philosophical track.

My sincere acknowledgements are due to the authors and the publishers whose works directly or indirectly proved to be beneficial in preparing the papers. I am thankful to the editors of different journals who have selected my papers for publication and because of that I have been able to get stimulating responses from readers in India and abroad. Some friends of mine have repeatedly requested me to bring all such related papers in one single volume so that it would be more profitable for the interested scholars. I am grateful to my revered teacher, Prof. Ganeswar Misra who has been a constant source of inspiration and encouragement in my intellectual activity. I am happy that Messrs Ajanta Books International, Delhi has undertaken the task of printing the papers in a single volume.

I have tried to present my argument in a way that can be of interest to the general reader as well as to professionals : but I have not made an attempt to make my subject appear more simple than it is.

BIJAYANANDA KAR

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM OF SENTENTIAL MEANING IN THE PŪRVA MĪMĀṂSĀ PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

I

Introduction

The issues concerning language occupy a prominent place in the classical Indian philosophical literature. It is definitely conspicuous while discussions on *pramāṇa* specially *Śabda pramāṇa* are carried on. As a matter of tradition, the classical Indian philosopher or *dārśanika* puts emphasis on *pramāṇa* in all philosophical discussions and is not prepared to accept anything which does not confirm to *pramāṇa* or valid argumentation. This is true irrespective of the point whether he is orthodox or heterodox. That is why *dārśanikas* are also known in this tradition as *pramāṇikas*.[1]

Having accepted *pramāṇa* as a basis for any philosophical discussion the Indian philosopher raises certain interesting issues concerning language and its meaning. What is the knowledge concerning language (*śabda jñāna*) and what is the basis by which such knowledge is possible (*śabda pramāṇa*) are some of the major issues which have been widely discussed in the Indian philosophy of language. Even those classical philosophers like the Vaiśeṣikas and Bauddhas who do not accept *śabda* as a *pramāṇa* have discussed the issue concerning language and have their distinctive views about *śabda jñāna*.

But, surprisingly enough, the modern writers have somehow or other neglected this important dimension of classical Indian philosophy. S.N. Dasgupta, for instance, writes in 1922 : "A discussion on this topic (*Śabda pramāṇa*) has but little philosophical value".[2] However, of late, D.M. Datta has recognised the importance of *Śabda pramāṇa* and writes in 1932 : "...and finally of the claim of verbal testimony (*Śabda pramāṇa*) to be an independent source of knowledge, have been discussed so seriously, thoroughly and logically that their philosophical worth can be ignored only through an unphilosophical prejudice".[3] Though Datta has duly noted the importance of *Śabda pramāṇa*, it is yet to be shown in detail as to what is the Indian philosophical study of language.

Very often it has been accepted without any serious opposition that Indian study of language or *śabda* is mostly in the context of Vedic testimony and *Śabda pramāṇa*, from that point of view, is regarded as *Veda pramāṇa*. This has been felt as valid particularly in the context of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā which, it is held, supports Vedic ritualistic orthodoxy maximum. But such a rendering has, no doubt, given rise to a sort of dogmatism and authoritarianism far remote from the usual philosophical tract based on reason. Moreover *śabda jñāna* has been understood in some of the modern works on Indian philosophy as the study of word-meanings in terms of mental thoughts and ideas and in that sense the whole issue is given a psychological rendering which obviously beclouds the philosophical significance based on logic and valid argumentation. Recently, however, G. Misra rightly emphasises the logical basis of *Śabda pramāṇa* by interpreting it as method of logical analysis of language. Of course Misra's observation is confined to the philosophy of Advaita.[4]

A careful study of classical Indian philosophy would reveal that philosophy based on *pramāṇa* can never afford to miss the tract of logic and a philosophical study of language or *śabda* has been undertaken purely from the logical point of view without having any leaning on psychologism or authoritarianism. And this is more evident when one studies the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā discussion on language. According to it understanding language is a distinct type of knowledge and

which is not possible by any of the empirical sources like *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna*, etc., but is obtained by the help of *Śabda pramāṇa*. It is said that the meanings of words are known to us conventionally. They, therefore, cannot be taken as a means of proof. But the meanings of sentences involving a knowledge of the relations of words cannot be known by any other available means of proof. In other words it is through the method of logical analysis of linguistic as well as cognitive forms of different meaningful sentences knowledge regarding the workings of language as a whole becomes possible. Since this knowledge is confined to language as such, it is not factual but linguistic. In this sense the Mīmāṃsakas including the Prābhākaras accept *Śabda* as an independent source of knowledge concerning the logical sturcture of language and they do not thereby mean tradition or *aitihya* as some modern writers on the subject have thought.[5] Indian philosophical discussion of language has, of course, widespread ramifications. In the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā philosophy various issues concerning the relation between meaning and its symbols, the criteria for meaningful employment of linguistic symbols and the relation between word-meaning and sentence-meaning have been widely discussed. Here, in the present work, we, however, limit our discussion to the issue concerning sentential meaning as presented by the Mīmāṃsakas.

II

Vākyār'ha Jñāna

The Mīmāṃsakas like other Indian philosophers accept the distinctive character of the knowledge of the meaning of sentence (*Vākyārtha jñāna*). *Śabda* though ordinarily means sound, in the philosophical sense it refers to a linguistic entity and specially in the sentential context it is termed as *pada* to preserve its technical subtlety. *Vākya* here does not mean simply sentence belonging to a particular language. It refers to the meaning conveyed in any expression concerning any language, either actual or possible. In other words *vākyārtha jñāna* need not be understood as verbal knowledge about the

grammatical structure of any particular living language. The whole study is never an excursion either to grammar or to philology. It is exclusively a philosophical enterprise in the sense it aims at a logical study of the linguistic tool. Here the Indian philosopher is one with the modern analytical philosopher in holding that philosophers are concerned with sentences only insofar as they are carriers of meaning.[6]

It is held by both Prābhākaras and Bhāṭṭas that words and what are denoted by words (i.e., meanings) are never created but those are eternal. The scholars who take the Mīmāṃsakas' discussion of *śabda* as nothing but discussion on Veda have come to remark that since the Mīmāṃsakas give maximum importance to Vedic rituals, they must be meaning by the eternity of *śabda* and its *artha* as nothing but the eternity of *Veda vākya* and its import. But for the Mīmāṃsakas the discussion on *śabda* is not confined to Vedic *śabda* alone but rather to any meaningful utterance and in that way discussion on *vākyārtha* is applicable to Vedic as well as non-Vedic *vākyas*. As such the eternal character is attributed to word and its meaning in the general linguistic plane. Vedas might be respected as holy scriptures and for that, from religious point of view, Vedic or scriptural utterances might be regarded as most authentic and eternal. There is, no doubt, a definite religious sanction for all this from the point of view of dogma and belief. But in the philosophical plane where reason is the criterion for making decision, any dogmatic adherence to tradition is hardly convincing. Moreover, as already indicated, the very fact that discussion on *vākyārtha* is not confined to Vedic *vākya* clearly shows that this study is on the plane of language as such.

It is a philosophical study of language and the view that *śabda* and its *artha* are eternal is to be understood in the logical perspective and not in the dogmatic religious background. Since the discussion on word and its meaning is regarded to be logical and not empirical, there seems to be some plausibility in the Mīmāṃsā philosophers' remark that *śabda* is eternal. The word 'eternal' reveals the non-temporal or non-empirical character of language. Any discussion on the history and origin of language is obviously an empirical

study and it is surely of interest to a linguist or a philologist or even an etymologist.[7] But an analytical philosopher who is engaged at the logical analysis of language is involved in that aspect of language which concerns with meaning at a non-empirical setting.

Having accepted the distinctive significance of the sentential meaning (*vākyārtha*), the Mīmāṃsakas are divided amongst themselves on the issue : whether the words of a sentence possess the double function of placing their individual as well as the construed meaning of the sentence or the words only place their individual meanings and such meanings subsequently combine to form the single meaning of the sentence. The Mīmāṃsakas led by Prābhākara accept the first alternative and advocate the theory of *Anvitābhidhāna*. The Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas (led by Kumārilla) accept the second alternative and advocate the theory of *Abhihitānvaya*. It may be noticed here that both the Prābhākaras and the Bhāṭṭas agree that a sentence is meaningful only on the basis of the meaning of the constituent words. In other words the sentence has many components, i.e., words or *padas*. The controversy between the two groups of Mīmāṃsakas lies on the point that while the Prābhākaras regard words as having both the function of expressing the individual and the construed meaning, the Bhāṭṭas accept words as possessing the individual meaning and subsequently by way of combination a synthetic meaning of sentence becomes possible.

But the Vaiyākaraṇakas or the grammarians led by Bhartṛhari do not accept sentence as breakable but as non-breakable unit and thus regard sentential meaning as one unit of thought (*akhaṇḍavākyārtha*). Their view-point is based upon the argument that if language is invariably expressed only in the sentential form, it has to be accepted that separate words cannot assert separate meanings. Words can have meaning only in so far as they belong to sentence. Now, before passing any remark upon this view of the grammarians let us discuss the views held by the two groups of the Mīmāṃsakas.

III

Anvitābhidhānavāda

Words, according to the Prābhākaras, express their own individual meanings and also the meaning of the sentence. It is not the case that words first only present their individual meanings and later on such individual meanings when combine together, the meaning of a sentence (a synthetic whole) is possible. The construed meaning (*anvita artha*) is expressed by words themselves. Construction, according to this view, is never a subsequent function. It is rather presupposed in the very utterance of the words of a sentence (*anvitānām eva abhidhānam, na tu abhihitānām anvayaḥ*).

The meaning of a word cannot be fully determined in isolation from the meaning of other connected words. A word can be meaningful only in so far as it is related to other words. To put differently a word that means is always a related word. So also meaning is not to be construed as absolute in any case but always is to be viewed as relative. It is said : "*anvitānāmeva arthānāmabhidhānaṃ, na ananvitānām*". That means, it is a related meaning that is invariably expressed by a word and not an unrelated meaning. In this context Prābhākara's expression: '*vyatiṣaktārthābhidhānam*' can be noted. *Arthābhidhānam* is invariably in terms of *vyatiṣakta* or association. To put in other words, it is the associated or related meaning that belongs to the words themselves and the sentential meaning cannot be construed as something new and altogether different from the word-meanings. *Vākyārtha*, in this sense, may be said as not something entirely different from *śabdārtha* (or to put more precisely *padārtha*) but is rather presupposed in it. Of course, from this let it not be understood that *vākyārtha* is to be analysed into *śabdārtha*. Because in that sense the unitary meaning of *vākya* is affected. Rather, on the contrary, it is held that words are meaningful as having related meanings and such related meanings themselves formulate sentential meaning. The sentential meaning is not the aggregate of the meanings of separate words constituting it.

Now, it may be raised as to what is the significance of holding the view that the word has both individual and related meanings. What is meant by the saying that a word has 'the double function of placing its own individual and the construed meaning ? Does it not amount to saying that word has two meanings which is somewhat implausible ? And moreover if, as already indicated before, word cannot be understood in isolation but only in association with other words in a sentence then what exactly is the significance of maintaining that word has also individual meaning ?

The Prābhākaras seem to have anticipated these questions and have tried to meet all these from their own standpoint. In order to elucidate his point of view Prābhākara brings out the special theory of *kāryānvitābhidhāna* which is regarded as a special application of the general theory of *anvitābhidhāna*. According to this formulation the meaning of words can be known only when they occur in a sentence enjoining some duty or *kārya* and as such words denote objects only as related to the other factors of sentence. Prābhākara maintains that all words directly or indirectly enjoin some action. The utterance of the word 'horse', for instance, does not mean simply a single object of reference completely isolated from any other meanings. It has the implicit suggestion that a horse is either to be brought in or is to be given away and so on. In other words, the utterance of such a word must carry the expectation that something has to be done with the horse. Here, it can be marked that the Prābhākaras analyse the linguistic form and conclude that it is to be interpreted in terms of action. A linguistic utterance cannot simply be a statement of fact but must be judgemental or evaluative in nature, *Vākyārtha* is determined not in terms of report but in terms of action. Whether one agrees with this view or not this at least is to be granted that here Prābhākara makes a study of language from the standpoint of a logical analysis of meaning alone.

Philosophers often raise the question that whether words mean universal or particular. Modern analytical philosophers distinguish, in this connection, between a descriptive and a demonstrative symbol and suggest thereby that the former

connotes a class or universal while the latter points to the particular. In the classical Indian philosophical tradition too there is the distinction between *bodhaka* (a mere indicative symbol) and *vācaka* (connotative symbol).[8] The word : 'horse' does not mean a particular horse. It is equally applicable to black horse, white horse and so on. In this sense it is regarded as a class concept denoting a universal. But words like 'this', 'that', 'here', 'now' etc. are demonstrative symbols and as such these have referring significance.

The Prābhākaras maintain that it is the universal (*jāti*) that is denoted by the word. It is argued that not only imperative sentences but even the sentences having apparent existential import have to be linked up with certain practical interest. It is rightly said that Prābhākara declines to admit the view that verbal statement, whether Vedic or not, can ever point merely to existent things. He only limits the scope of such statements to *sādhya* in keeping with the pragmatic view he takes of all knowledge.[9] This shows that Prābhākara's discussion of *śabda*, at least in the context of philosophy, is not confined to Veda but is applicable to any verbal statement. As said earlier, on hearing the word 'horse', one is to expect that something has to be done with the horse. This means that even such sentence like "There is a cow" has the implicit suggestion that the cow is to be fed or anything of that sort. Mere existential import is though grammatically flawless, it is argued here that logically such rendering is not accurate. It is the verb expressing an action is viewed as the nucleus of a sentence. The Prābhākaras, it seems, speak in favour of a pragmatic interpretation of *vākya* not on grammatical or even psychological considerations but on the grounds of logic. That all sentences are to be interpreted not in terms of *siddha* (i.e., existent something) but in terms of *sādhya* (i.e., something to be accomplished) is a philosophical view based on arguments and never on a matter of blind belief of tradition. They argue that all words in a sentence are related to verb either directly or indirectly and in that way they while primarily express their universal meaning, also have indirect reference to verb. In other words, the words convey their individual meaning, i.e., universal and also the related meaning which is nothing but

the meaning of the sentence. Thus the conclusion is that words must denote things only as related to the other factors of the injunction or *vidhi* and no word can be comprehended as having any denotation when taken apart from such a sentence. This is the implication of the famous saying of Prābhākara : "*vākyārthena vyavahāraḥ.*"[10] That is all usage is through the sentence and its meaning. Of course it is also held that words express the meaning of the sentence only through the comprehension of the meaning of the words themselves.

But, in spite of all these clarifications, the critics find it difficult to accept the Prābhākara view that words have double meanings, i.e., the individual and the related. The Bhāṭṭas argue that words have their own individual meanings and construction is made later while sentence is formulated. D.M. Datta, from the Advaita point of view, argues that if universals be the meanings of words, the meaning of a sentence cannot be directly obtained from words.[11] Moreover, if meanings of different individual words bear the *anvita artha-sambandha* (construed meaning—relation) within themselves then all words, it is argued, would be synonymous.[12] Construed meaning is possible only when the sentential form comes into being. Furthermore, in the Prābhākaras' theory, the issue regarding *jāti* and *vyakti* is never satisfactorily tackled. It is said, the words denote universal. But in that case how is sentential meaning already imbedded in words? In sentential meaning there is the definite occurrence of the sense of individuation. In this connection the remark of Dr. Jha[13] that while the cognition brought about by the word refers to class, the action that follows the word pertains to the individual does not seem to be satisfactory. Because verb in a sentence which connotes action never brings the sense of particularity. In this connection the remark[14] that words explicitly mean universal and implicitly mean particular is also not acceptable. Because having admitted a logical difference between concepts of *jāti* and *vyakti*, one cannot meaningfully assert that both *jāti* and *vyakti* can be operated significantly referring to the same situation.

Attempts have, however, been made to defend the Prābhākara point of view.[15] It is said that all the words in a sentence

associate together in communicating the sentential meaning. Though all the words of a sentence have their own meaning-function, each word carries its own meaning-function in association with the meaning-function of other words. To put differently, a word has capacity to communicate its own meaning only when it gets the association of another word conveying its own meaning. It does not follow from this that all the meanings of all words are mixed up or all the words mean the same thing. A word taken in isolation does not communicate anything. It can communicate only when its syntactical relation with other words is noted. Of course any two words, when combined together do not necessarily carry a sensible sentential meaning, e.g. "*vahninā sitayati*" (cools with fire). Here the Prābhākaras acknowledge the condition of *yogyatā* or competency along with the conditions of *ākāṇkṣā* (expectancy) and *sannidhi* (proximity). *Anvitābhidhāna* means that the meaning of a word is communicated only in association with the meaning of any other expected, proximate and appropriate word. Now, before discussing anything further, on this theory, let us look to the view of the Bhāṭṭas.

IV

Abhihitānvayavāda

Words belonging to a sentence, according to the Bhāṭṭas, express only their isolated meanings. Those meanings subsequently combine to produce the construed meaning of the sentence. The construed or the synthetic meaning is not possible by the words themselves but only when they combine in a sentential form in accordance with certain syntactical rules. *Vākyārtha*, according to this view, is not simply same as *śabdārtha* but is something different. The individual, isolated meanings of words are synthesised and then the total meaning of the sentence becomes possible. The basis of the meaning of the sentence, however, lies in the meanings of the words composing the sentence. But the meanings of the words need synthesised so that the sentential meaning is formulated. Each separate word in a sentence conveys its conventional meaning and the sentence-meaning is a construc-

tion (*anvaya*) of such expressed meaning as per the principles of *ākāṅkṣā, yogyatā* and *āsatti.* It is admitted by the Bhāṭṭas that words functioning in different situations occur as related to sentential meanings. Even then one is able to understand the isolated word-meanings separately. Because, without this, a word learnt from use in one context could not be used in another context. But the sentences, unlike words, do not have meanings independently. A sentence-meaning is not simply a summation of the separate meanings of its constituent words. A sentence possesses certain unitary meaning. But this unitary meaning is due to the synthesis of these separate meanings in accordance with the syntactical rules as already noted.

Let us try to understand the implications of the theory by taking the following illustration. In the sentence : "Bind the cow" (*gāu badhāna*), the word "bind' directly denotes the act of binding in general; and it indirectly indicates the particular act of binding with reference to the particular situation. The word 'cow', on the other hand, denotes directly the universal cow and indirectly it indicates the individual cow as the object related to the act of binding. Thus the construed meaning of the sentence is obtained not directly from words themselves, but indirectly through the meaning of the words. In this context the following remark made by Kumārilla may be noted. According to him, as fuel cannot do the cooking, but only through the flame of fire so *padas* (i.e., words) cannot directly convey *vākyārtha*, but only through the *padārthas* (i.e., (word-meanings).[16]

From all these discussions, it follows that the sentential meaning is though grounded on the isolated meanings of each of the words used in the sentence, it is finally made possible by a sort of construction of all such meanings which again is due to the application of the syntactical rules. According to the Bhāṭṭas a distinction is to be admitted between the knowledge of individual word-meanings and the knowledge of the sentential meaning. While the individual word-meanings are claimed to have been cases of remembrance, the sentential meaning is said to be *śābda-bodha* or knowledge regarding language. The isolated word-meanings organised and structured in the syntactical relation constitute the sentential

meaning. And the sentential meaning is claimed to have a new meaning (*viśiṣṭaḥ ekārthaḥ*).

It has been indicated before that sentential meaning is made possible by means of the application of certain syntactical conditions. In fact the Naiyāyikas who also accept the theory of *Abhihitānvaya* acknowledge the afore-mentioned conditions and add *tātparya* which is a semantic condition. The Bhāṭṭas maintain that the syntactical rules are to be observed so that the particular combination of all such words give rise to a total meaning. But such rules are to be supplemented by something on the basis of which the meaning of the sentence is obtained. It is said that the separate words have separate meanings. These meanings are connected by the syntactical conditions. But such a connection cannot give rise to *vākyārtha*. For *vākyārtha* is a construed meaning and this distinct total meaning cannot be obtained only by the combination of separate word-meanings which are universals in essence. In spite of the fact that these different meanings are related on the basis of syntactical rules, it does not become clear that a synthetic meaning which brings the significance of particularisation can be made possible only on such factors. Those are, no doubt, helpful in bringing out the sentential meaning; but those are not themselves adequate.

It is seen before that the Prābhākaras, in this connection, prefer to hold that words themselves have another meaning (related meaning) basing on which they plead that *vākyārtha* is possible. Construction, according to them, is not something over and above the word-meanings. But the Bhāṭṭas, on the other hand, have found difficulties in accommodating double meanings to words. They, of course, agree with the Prābhākaras that words have single unrelated meanings and primarily the word means *jāti*. It may be noted here that Kumārilla himself uses *jāti* and *ākṛti* interchangeably; though later Bhāṭṭa mīmāṃsakas prefer to use *jāti* only so far as word-meanings are concerned.[17] But the Prābhākaras hold that word means *jāti* in its isolated sense and it also, according to them, has a related meaning (i.e., in relation to other words in the sentence) which brings out the sense of particularisation or individuation. The Bhāṭṭas hold that words in themselves mean only universals. But in that case the problem remains

as to how can one account for the total sentential meaning which is not simply an arbitrary combination of free-floating universals but also integrate such concepts by way of relating them to specific particular situation or context.

It is here the Bhāṭṭas introduce a technical concept called *lakṣaṇā*. It stands for secondary meaning which is said to be the outcome of the primary (*abidhā*) possessed by each word used in the sentence. Such secondary meanings do not, however, directly belong to the words as in that case there would be nothing to distinguish between the Prābhākara and the Bhāṭṭa viewpoints. It is held, in this connection, that the words resurrect the meanings and the meanings cause cognition of the sentential meaning through *lakṣaṇā*. Pārthasārathī explains that it is the *padārthas* which are placed with the function of *lakṣaṇā*.[18]

Difficulties have been found in determining the status of *lakṣaṇā*. Textualists have found that Pārthasārathī is obscure in his exposition of the concept of *lakṣaṇā*.[19] It is not clear whether *lakṣaṇā* belongs to *pada* or *padārtha*. In both the cases there are difficulties. In the former case the Bhāṭṭa position remains almost indistinguishable from that of the Prābhākaras and in the latter case there is the questionable suggestion that the direct meaning (*padārtha*) itself give rise to secondary meaning (*lakṣaṇā*). It is only a word which may have both primary and secondary meanings and as per the situation or context the meaning of the word may be determined. It does not seem proper to hold that one meaning either contains or gives rise to another meaning.

V

General Estimate

Now let us make some observations before concluding this work. The dispute between the Prābhākaras and the Bhāṭṭas seems to have been centralised on the point that whether the sentential meaning is already presupposed in the meanings of the constituent words or that is a new construction over and above the word-meanings. From the afore-said discussions of both the theories it is perhaps fairly clear that the dispute

between the parties centres around a logical issue, i.e., whether the sentential meaning is to be analysed into the word-meanings or it is one irreducible unit by itself. The controversy does not rest on differences based either on grammar or philology. It also does not seem to have been based on certain psychological matter or preference. Neither the Bhāṭṭas nor the Prābhākaras advocate their respective theories on some psychological or subjective grounds. Even if someone reads a motive behind the Prābhākara theory of *Anvitābhidhāna* that in order to safeguard the ritualistic portion of the Vedas the sentential meaning is interpreted by them in terms of *kriyā* and this sort of motivational analysis though has some value in certain sphere, it does not surely contribute anything towards philosophical discussion.

Both the parties advocate that words designate universal or class-concept. The distinction between a universal and a particular is surely a philosophical distinction based on the grounds of logic. It is not due to either philological or psychological considerations. The Prābhākaras argue that since word means universal, it cannot be confined to one sentential construction, and for that reason it can never be conceived as fully independent of sentence. A word has, by definition, meaning and no meaning can be conceived unless the word is used in a sentence. The single word 'horse' means a quadruped having certain characteristics. Even if one does not actually use this word in a sentence like "It is a black horse", it (the word) carries the meaning only insofar as it is related to a logically possible sentential construction. That is perhaps the reason why the Vaiyākaraṇakas who profess a radical thesis of *Akhaṇḍavākyārtha* advocate that words can have meaning only if they belong to sentence, and they have no separate meanings. On this point, the Prābhākaras are quite close to the Vaiyākaraṇakas. And their views surely depend upon their arguing the issue from similar logical standpoint. Of course, as it is already indicated before, the Prābhākaras agree with the Bhāṭṭas as against the Vaiyākaraṇakas that the sentence has many components, i.e., words and the sentential meaning is to be determined in terms of meanings of the words. In other words, the Prābhākaras do not plead for *akhaṇḍavākyārtha* but only suggest that construction

(*anvaya*) is not something new but is already implied in the meanings of the words themselves.

Now, even if, one agrees with the Prābhākaras that word which has meaning is either actually or possibly used in a sentence, it does not become plausible that the sentential meaning of a particular sentence, e.g., "A barking dog seldom bites" is already implied in such words like 'barking', 'dog', etc. used in the sentence. The particular construed meaning of the sentence becomes possible only when different words are combined in a particular order and refer to a specific situation. It is true, 'dog' as a word must be meaningful only if it is in relation to some sentential construction. But the particular sentential construction that is made possible by the combination of words as per the rules of syntax and semantics has got to be accepted as something new and different even if one agrees to the saying that different sentences may mean the same meaning or proposition.

The Prābhākaras, in order to meet the objections from the critics, hold that word has two meanings; one isolated and the other related. Though each word is differentiated from another word in respect of its isolated meaning, it must have some related meaning by virtue of which it can be related to other words. Here, it seems, the Prābhākaras are guided by a pseudo logical argument that a thing cannot be related to another thing if the relation is not intrinsic to both the relata that it relates. The doctrine of internal relation, in spite of its having strong supporters in the history of philosophy, has inherent shortcomings. We need not here elaborate the logical difficulties of the theory of internal relation. But this much, perhaps, is required to indicate here that a word as such need not possess two implications, i.e., one : 'referring to itself' and the other : 'its being related to other words used in the sentence'. The very insistence that a word used in the sentence must have a related meaning is surely based on the illological claim that unless the word has related meaning within itself it cannot be related with other words of the sentence. Rather, on the contrary, the very point of relation logically presupposes that the relata are in someway different otherwise there is no significance in relating the two.

It has been pointed out before that the Prābhākaras do not tackle the issue concerning *jāti* and *vyakti* satisfactorily. In the sentential or more precisely in the propositional context when one refers to the logical distinction between universal and particular, it becomes intelligible at the background that particular refers to the subject and universal is about the predicate. In the sentence : "Man is mortal" the predicate 'mortality' is predicated of the subject 'man'. That means 'man', in this expression, is the subject about which a description viz., 'mortality' is applied. Universal as the class character is always descriptive and particular as the individual is that to which description applies. Hence any linguistic expression in order that it is meaningful must have descriptive as well as non-descriptive components. Of course one is to concede that the word which functions in one sentential context as a subject-particular may in another sentential context very well function like predicate-universal, e.g., 'man' in "Man is mortal" and "He is man and is mortal".

Hence, if the Prābhākaras maintain that all words in a sentence denote only *jāti* then surely this becomes logically not tenable. For, as we have seen, the concept of universal in the linguistic discourse is a relative concept and it cannot operate without the other relative concept, i.e., particular. In this connection the suggestion (that is hinted before) the verb in a sentence which denotes action pertains to individual is also not acceptable. Because in a sentence like "The child is drinking water" the verb signifies a description viz., drinking activity; and insofar as it is descriptive, it is significant only when it is about one individual, i.e., the child. In other words, it is not the verb which denotes individual or particular but it functions meaningfully within the sentential context only when it functions as a descriptive about the particular subject.

It is previously remarked that the Prābhākaras' interpreting sentential meaning in terms of action has actually been advanced on some logical considerations. According to them, sentences simply conveying information about existence are not significant by themselves. They, in order to be significant, have to be related to some other descriptive expressions connoting action. A sentence like "Black cow gives more milk" has, according to this view, an implicit

suggestion that it has to be procured so that more milk can be made available. Now, it seems, such a view, though it is on the logical plane, actually aims at reducing all *siddhārtha vākyas* to *vidhi vākyas*. Such a move of the Prābhākaras does not contribute to the issue as to how sentential meaning is operated within linguistic framework but rather how it should function. In other words, this view, in the guise of describing the linguistic sphere, turns out to be a recommendation. And, even as recommendation, it has difficulty. Because, if someone holds that it is the action which is the nucleus centring around which agent exists then equally one can argue from the opposite extreme that it is the agent which is at the centre and all actions become plausible insofar as they belong to the agent. Such moves, as indicated before, do not become descriptive about the functioning of language.

Now let us turn to the Bhāṭṭa position. From the logical point of view they seem to be in the right direction when they argue against the Prābhākaras that the construed meaning of the sentence cannot be reduced to the word-meanings. It is true that no word can be meaningful unless it is conceived within a sentential framework. But that does not at all necessitate the conclusion that the particular sentential construction which is made possible by means of certain combination of words as per syntactical conditions is already implied in the word-meanings themselves. Words, of course, stand for universal meanings. But when the words are used in a particular sentential framework there is definitely some sort of integration between the univeral descriptive meaning aspect and the particular referential aspect. In the sentence the words are combined and as such descriptive meanings attain referential significance; and thus a complete meaningful expression becomes possible. Hence by emphasising the independent status of the sentential meaning the Bhāṭṭas seem to have gained a logical point of advantage.

In this connection it would not be unprofitable if we contrast the Bhāṭṭa position from that of the Vaiyākaraṇakas. The Vaiyākaraṇakas who plead for *akhaṇḍavākyārtha* argues that since words cannot be conceived as having separate meanings, it is the sentential meaning which is to be regarded as one unbreakable unit and the analytical deduction of sentential

meaning to several component word-meanings is purely abstract and is done at a later stage for some theoretical purposes. This is not the way in which the sentential meaning is actually grasped. But, if we carefully go through the Bhāṭṭa point of view, we find a note of justification insofar as it is seen that the unitary character of a sentential meaning is not necessarily disrupted while we also accommodate separate word-meanings. The individual words used in the sentence do have separate generic meaning.

Though it is rightly said that "ordinarily we do not utter isolated words or phrases",[20] and for meaningful communication sentence in either explicit or implicit form is indispensable, it is to be admitted that word-meaning has legitimate distinction from sentence-meaning in the linguistic framework. For instance, the word 'light' in the sentence : "The light is bright" is used in one sense whereas the same word used in another sentence : "The view expressed in the meeting is too light to be seriously considered" has a different sense. In other words, the word acquires different meanings insofar as it is fixed up in different sentential construction. Of course, one may argue here that whenever we have to consider the meaning of a word, it must be in and through some sentential construction. But, even then, we can note the differences between different uses of the word and can hold that the generic meaning of the word gets a definite twist when it is tied down to a particular sentential construction. From all these observations, it is rather more plausible to decide that words have generic isolated meanings; though such meanings are appropriately moulded when words are used in the particular sentential set-up. In this sense the Bhāṭṭa point of view seems to be in the right track.

It is already seen that like the Prābhākaras, the Bhāṭṭas hold that the words mean universal. Such a view seems to have been based on the argument that if a word primarily meant not *jāti* but *vyakti* or individual then it would have as many meanings as there are different individuals under that class. It seems, both the groups by advocating this view about word-meaning have made a significant contribution in the field of philosophical study of language. So far as the logical aspect of meaning is concerned, the word, of course, stands for class

characteristics. But here the question is raised as to how in a sentential construction the words become applicable to the individuals since their logical meaning involves a reference to the class characteristics belonging to the group only. We have already considered the Prābhākara reaction to this issue. Now, while considering the Bhāṭṭa response, we find that according to them words, even if, have generic meanings by themselves, in the sentential construction they all have been so placed together (as per the syntactical conditions) that a total sentential meaning becomes possible through a secondary-meaning function that is called *lakṣaṇā*. It is, of course, the case that the syntactical conditions are very much required for the formulation of a complete expression. But the sentence, even if, fulfills all the syntactical conditions and thereby becomes meaningful in a general sense, it does not carry the propositional or assertive significance until and unless it also fulfills certain semantic condition which is logically indispensable. Sentences, according to the Naiyāyikas, are therefore meaningful when they well pass through the test of *tātparya*, i.e. objective context. The particular situation has to be taken into account before judging the meaning of the sentence.

The Bhāṭṭas, in this regard, have talked about *lakṣaṇā* which more or less stands for secondary meaning. Instead of going through the dispute whether *lakṣaṇā* belongs to *pada* or to *padārthā*, this much here would suffice to point out that secondary meaning is taken into account only when one finds that the sentential meaning is not obtained through primary meaning. As for example, the meaning of the sentence : "Cuttack is on Mahanadi" does not mean Cuttack city is on the river Mahanadi but it is by the side of the river Mahanadi. That means here the meaning of the sentence cannot be determined if one simply sticks to the primary or the *abidhā* meaning of the different words used in the sentence. Here one has to take resort to the metaphorical or secondary meaning and thereby gets the proper sentential meaning. But one need not construe from this that on all occasions in order to determine the sentential meaning, one has to take resort to the secondary meaning. While the primary meaning is not workable, it is there only proper to seek for secondary meaning.

If we take the Bhāṭṭa point of view, it appears that on all instances the sentential meaning is to be obtained with the operation of the secondary meaning-function. But this is not obviously the case. The sentential meaning is possible either through the primary or through the secondary meaning taking the relevant situation or context into account. It is not the person's desire or intention but the objective situation that clearly determines whether the sentential meaning is to be accepted in terms of primary or secondary meaning.

But the Bhāṭṭas do not, it seems, take all these important point into account and have come to regard that if words used in the sentence primarily mean universal, they should mean particulars in the secondary sense. And by that alone when the words are combined in a sentential context as per syntactical rules, the total construed meaning becomes possible. But it should be pointed out here that if the words mean universal and this is granted on the grounds of logic then again to say that words also by themselves mean particulars do not seem to be proper. Of course in the sentential context, the words when used together do refer to certain specific particular situation; and this is possible only when one recognises that the generic (*vācaka*) words are used in the sentential construction along with the demonstrative symbols (*bodhaka*) so that words also attain signification in the sense of referring to individuals. We think, the classical Indian distinction between *bodhaka* and *vācaka* is very relevant here to account for the meaning of sentence.

However, in spite of the few critical observations made here, we should remark that both the groups of the Mīmāṃsakas have been able to draw our attention to certain very subtle points of philosophy of language and in that sense their worth need not be belittled.*

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10. See his *Bṛhati*, p. 188 (Madras edn.). The term : '*vākya*' here does not necessarily imply Vedic '*vākya*' alone.
11. *The Six Ways of Knowing*, op. cit., p. 303.
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16. "*Vākyārthamitaye teṣāṃ pravṛttau nāntarīyakam pāke jvāleva kāṣṭhānāṃ padārtha pratipādanam*"——*Śloka-Vārtika*, *Adhi*, VII, 343.
17. Vide *Ślokavārtika*, *ākṛtivāda*,i.3, "*Jātim eva ākṛtim prāhuḥ . . .*". If *jāti* refers to universal or class character then surely it is different from *ākṛti* which refers to the form of the object and in that way it has surely a non-logical rather physicalistic suggestion. Since the discussion is carried on exclusively in the conceptual level of meaning, it is preferable to use such logical terminologies like *jāti* in contrast to *vyākti*. Gautama, in his *Nyāya-sūtra* (2.2.66) also favours a similar point of view.
18. Vide his *Śāstra-Dīpikā* : '*abhihitaiḥ padārthaiḥ lakṣaṇayā vākyārthaḥ pratipādyate*" (quoted by Majumdar, op. cit., p. 101).
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CHAPTER TWO

THE PROBLEM OF ERROR IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

I

The problem of error in Indian philosophy is discussed in the different theories of error known as the *Khyāti-vādas*. *Khyāti* stands for knowledge and hence *Khyāti-vāda* may mean theory of knowledge. But then how can the theory of knowledge turn out to be the theory of error ? It may be said that since knowledge in Indian philosophy includes both true, as well as false cognition, (a tradition unlike that of West) and the *Khyāti-vādas* are discussed only in the context of falsity or *bhrama*, each theory, therefore, turns out to be a view about the nature of the cognitive content of the so called erroneous knowledge. There are actually many speculations about this cognitive content. If for *Satkhyāti* this becomes real; for *Asatkhyāti* it is unreal; for *Sadsatkhyāti* both real and unreal; for *Anirvacanīyakhyāti* indeterminable and so on. Here the dispute seems to be purely centering around the specific determination of an epistemic concept, *viz.*, the cognitive content.

Before we pass on to the further details of the different theories from this epistemic point of view we may note another peculiarity in the interpretation of these theories of error as advanced by some of the modern scholars. Since the *Khyāti-vādas* are always discussed in the various classical treatises mostly through the illustrations derived from perceptual source like mistaking a shell to be silver, a single moon to be double, etc., it is argued that each of these theories of error centres its

discussion over the nature and content of erroneous perception. In other words, the point of debate is to account for the perception of shell as silver. Thus a theory of error turns out to be a theory on misperception of the form of illusion, hallucination and so on. Once this is conceded a psychological rendering of these theories of error seems to naturally follow. Following this rendering, it may be thought, that Indian philosophers, in this context, are actually involved in a psychological problem of accounting the abnormal perceptions like illusions, etc., where the senses are found to be deceptive.

How is erroneous perception possible ? Is it that the object is not fully perceived (*Akhyāti*) or is it that the object which is somewhere else is misrepresented to be here and now (*Anyathākhyāti*) or is it that an idea which is purely internal, is misperceived as an external object (*Ātmakhyāti*) and so on ? Thus far the question seems to be psychologically bent. It needs an explanation about the happening of such abnormal perception.

But these explanations in form of different theories are such that they are not limited to empirical scrutiny, so that, none of them can either be rejected or accepted in preference to other. There is clearly the presence of some non-empirical commitment which shows that these different theories, by way of explaining the erroneous phenomenon, not merely restrict themselves to the empirically available data but freely posit certain further data which are not empirical but metaphysical. Mark; when the Akhyātivādins advance his theory of non-perception he also claims that the object of commonly called misperception is not unreal but real. The Ātmakhyātivādins seem to be maintaining that an internal idea is misperceived as external object. The reality of internal idea cannot, however, be decided by some further empirical testing. All this shows that these different Indian theories of error are not just psychological theories in the empirical sense of the term so that certain decision can be made investigating the different empirical sources.

If they are not empirically bent what then are they ? It may be thought that these theories are metaphysical. Since by way of explaining the different cases of misperception these theories, as already pointed out, seem to be asserting some

further entities which are clearly not empirical but metaphysical. For example, for the Anyathākhyātivādin, it is argued that the erroneous perception points at a silver which is a unique type of object not ordinarily perceived but is only known through what is called an extra-ordinary perception (*Jñāna-lakṣaṇa pratyakṣa*). It is further claimed that the Advaitic explanation of error as *anirvacanīya* shows the object of error as unique of its kind which can never be described in any of the available empirical categories (*sat. asat*, etc.).

So the explanation of the erroneous perception, thus, turns out to be the metaphysical explanation about the nature and status of the object of misperception. A discussion about the empirical concept, thus, turns out to be the discussion about the metaphysical entity. It is thought that in India a psychological analysis of erroneous situation like misperception is not analysed empirically but metaphysically. In fact as we have already cited before some have actually taken this metaphysical rendering to be a special feature of the Indian discussion of psychological issues and this point has led many to suppose that psychology is never separated from philosophy in this philosophical tradition.[1]

In order to suppose this supposition a common line of interpretation of all the different theories of error is further sought. It is thought that the different theories are only debating about the nature and status of the *object* of the erroneous cognition.[2] For instance, when the shell is misperceived as silver is it real (*sat*) or is it unreal (*asat*) or is it both real and unreal (*sadasat*) or is it neither real nor unreal (*anīrvacanīya*) or is it real not in the sense of external object but in the sense of ideas (*vijñānas*)? That means the dispute among various theories is precisely about the being of object of erroneous cognition. All these theories are answers to the common question, 'whose *khyāti* is it'. This has the grammatical sanction because the names of these different theories are shown to be the instances of *tatpuruṣa samasa*. The theory of *Akhyāti*, as a case of *nanya tatpuruṣa*, is argued to be admitting the reality of object but only rejecting its full knowledge.

In this manner, it is thought that all the theories are, though, centering their discussion about the erroneous perception,

those are, actually debating about the ontological status of the object that is cognised in such cognition. Psychology is thus shown to be not separately discussed from metaphysics. It is, in this sense, remarked that the Indian philosopher, while searching for the cause of misperception in the sense of finding out a psychological explanation, is gradually led to speculate in diverse forms about the nature and status of the object of such misperception.

II

There are certain difficulties in adhering to this interpretation. Firstly, it is quite evident that the different theories of error are not at all theories about erroneous perception alone. It is, of course, true that the different theories, while elucidating their respective position, are primarily depending on certain common illustrations mostly derived from perceptual sources like mistaking a shell to be silver, a single moon to be double and a white crystal to be red, etc. But even then the theories, when they are claimed by the respective schools of philosophies, are not confined to cases of perceptual errors but also are inclusive of various types of conceptual errors. The different theories are precisely meant to explain error as such irrespective of the issue whether it is perceptual or conceptual. For Akhyātivādins as well as Satkhyātivādins not that there is absence of perceptual error but there is absence of error as such. For Asatkhyātivādins, Anirvacanīyakhyātivādins and Ātmakhyātivādins not that error is only traceable in perceptual source but that all pieces of empirical knowledge is, from the very root, grounded on the basis of error. While the Rāmānujāite, for instance, advocates about the reality of silver-cognition where something other than silver is commonly taken to be present, he is surely not merely interested to prove the reality of silver and thus explaining all cases of illusion, hallucination, etc. His main purpose is to defend the absolute claim that no knowledge, so far it is knowledge, can ever be false. Not only perceptual but all forms of knowing must reveal the real, if not completely at least partially. Nothing falls short of reality (*Yathārha sarva vijñānam*). An Asatkhyātivādin, on

the other hand, while arguing for the unreality of, both the perception of silver as well as shell, is precisely bent upon insisting, that all cases of knowledge are dubitable and hence not knowledge proper. A Śaṁkarite, in the similar line, argues that not only perception but also other forms of empirical knowing, carry the logical possibility of being false and therefore the thesis that is ultimately favoured is : 'Everything falls short of the real'. It may be marked here that even in logically more advanced systems like Nyaya, error (*apramā*) is not discussed under perception but is treated in an altogether independent position being contrasted from truth (*pramā*).

Some may think here that even if these theories of error are not so much psychological in the sense of accounting for erroneous perception, they may be termed as metaphysical in so far as they are various attempts of detemining the exact nature and status of the object of error. Let it, if anybody so insists, not be limited to the cases of perceptual error but also is inclusive of all cases of conceptual errors. It can still be maintained that the theories are different attempts at determining the objects of erroneous cognition as such, irrespective of the fact whether the erroneous cognition is perceptual or inferential or derived through other sources. It is precisely a metaphysical explanation of the content of error that is attempted in all the theories. As it is already said, the dispute is only on the issue whether the object of erroneous cognition is real or unreal or both or neither, etc.

Even in this modified form, the suggestion that the different theories are various attempts at accounting the nature and status of the object of erroneous cognition, does not clarify the position any further. Theories like *Akhyāti* and *Satkhyāti* not merely claim the object of erroneous cognition to be real but also advance a general thesis that both erroneous, as well as, non-erroneous cognition reveal the real. This view thus turns out to be the very denial of error. From the point of view of revelation, absolutely no distinction is admitted between truth and error. In fact, error, in this theory, is in such a way explained that the very logical distinction between truth and error is found to be obliterated. Nothing more, as a point of distinction, is said about the object of error. If the

object of error is *sat* then the object of truth is equally *sat*. So the question of determining the nature of the object of error does not arise. So far as the object is concerned there is no difference between truth and error. For the sake of clarity it may be pointed out in this connection that these two theories are not about the determination of the object of erroneous cognition but are attempts about specifying the precise connotation of error as such. How error is to be understood so that it can both be related with and contrasted from other cognate concepts like truth and knowledge seem to be more important problem for them. The conclusion to which these philosophers point at is that there is no logical distinction between truth and error and all are pieces of knowledge in the commonly accepted sense.

According to *Anirvacanīyakhyāti*, not that the object of the commonly called erroneous cognition is indeterminate but also that of non-erroneous cognition is argued to be indeterminate. Once this is granted, it can easily be marked that this theory like the previous ones is not actually aiming at determining about the object of erroneous cognition. The more important point for the theory is to declare that no empirical cognition can ever be fully unfalsifiable being fundamentally involved with names and forms (*nāma* and *rūpa*). It is the *jñāna* (cognition) which is *anirvacanīya* and not the object of cognition is *anirvacanīya*.

It is argued that *Asatkhyāti* claims about the unreality of both silver as well as shell. Hence it is *asat* which is to be regarded as the referent of all cognitions. Referent need not again mean, in this connection, another deeper mysterious reality. That would be as good as searching for Meinongian objects by maintaining that *asat* is also a kind of *sat* though not of an empirical type but of a deeper metaphysical type. The theory of *Asatkhyāti* seems to be more plausible when is understood in terms of the remark that all empirical knowledge is unreal in the sense of not pointing at anything whatsoever. The empirical knowledge of the object whatsoever is, from the very start, infected with mental conceptualisation (*kalpanā*) and hence is *asat*. So it is the knowledge which is *asat* and not the object of knowledge which is maintained by the theory to be *asat*.

Anyathākhyāti has been pictured as the doctrine according to which something previously known in some other context is mistakenly cognised to be the present object. In this manner *Anyathākhyāti* is understood in terms of *anyatra* (elsewhere) and *anyakāla* (elsewhen). But this, by no means, seems to follow from the meaning of the term, *anyathā* (elsewise). This unnecessarily clouds the logical significance of the doctrine and reads into it psychologism and mysticism. Error is defined in terms of '*atasmims tad iti jñānām*'[3] meaning thereby cognising (in the sense of judging) something as what it is not. It is the cognising which is found defective and not the object.[4] The object remains what it is. That is of no concern for a logical analysis of erroneous cognition. So to search out for a peculiar kind of object for erroneous cognition is simply to miss the point.

III

Why insist on the nature and the status of the object of error ? It is the belief in the *a priori* existence of object which unduly represents the different theories to be metaphysical whereas the different theories, as we have indicated before, are not metaphysically bent. It is simply pointless to debate about the erroneous object. The classical Indian philosophers do not debate among themselves about the nature and status of the object of erroneous cognition. Error is always taken to be the attributive (*mithyā jñāna* not *mithyā vastu*). A discussion which is significant only in the epistemological sphere is wrongly thought to be of metaphysical significance.

The term '*khyāti*', from the philosophical point of view, implies knowledge—the faculty of discriminating objects by appropriate designation.[5] In case of a *mithyā jñāna*, it is the discriminative faculty of knowledge which is lost and hence the knowledge becomes false. To put it in a different manner, in all cases of valid knowledge (*pramā*) there is the appropriate discrimination or judging ; and in cases of invalid knowledge there is misdiscrimination or misjudging. In this light it can be seen that the different *khyāti-vādas* are merely different ways of explaining the discriminative or judging aspect of knowledge. The problem is to precisely determine the nature

of the judgement from a strict logical point of view. What is judgement ? Is it that judgement never completely fails in describing something (*Satkhyāti*) ? Or, is it that it always fails in describing (*Asatkhyāti*) ? Under these two broad heads the different Indian theories of error seem to be adequately fitted.

Sat, Asat, etc., are thus shown to be not adjectives of the objects referred to by a particular piece of knowledge but those are directly the adjectives of knowledge (in the sense of judgement). Thus the terms like *Satkhyāti* (*sati+khyāti*), *Asatkhyāti* (*asati+khyāti*), *Anirvacanīyakhyāti* (*anirvacanīya+khyāti*), *Ātmakhyāti* (*ātma viṣayā+khyāti*), *Anyathākhyāti* (*anyathā+khyāti*) can be taken to be instances of *Karmadhārya samāsa*, instead of *Tatpuruṣa.* This actually fits into the philosophical discussion much better than the former interpretation. Let me briefly point out how some of the important *khyātivadas* tackle the problem of error while determining the nature of judgement from a logical point of view, as mentioned above.

(*i*) *Anyathākhyāti* : Nyāya is not committed to accept a non-conceptualised form of knowledge. Knowledge of all varieties is bound to be conceptual. The *avyapadesya* (Non-verbal) is only assumed as a postulate in the system upon which the proper knowledge structure is built. The knowledge is presentational in so far as the judgement refers to the object. It is precisely here the question of *pramā* and *apramā* is raised. When the judgement describes the referent as it is, it is true. True judgement stands for judging the referent in that form of attributes which actually belong to it (*Tadvati tat-prakārakam jñām pramā*) and false judgement is judging of the referent in some form of attributes other than those which actually belong to it (*Tadabhāvati tat-prakārakam jñānam bhramaḥ*). It does not mean, however, that the referent asserted in a wrong judgement is absolutely inapplicable. The shell that is judged as silver, for instance, does not mean that it can have any application. It is only the wrong judgement of shell as silver which is later on rectified but not the referent itself. Error is due to the descriptive part of the judgement.[6] In other words, in the cases of wrong judgements the referent is judged as something otherwise (*anyathā*). Error, thus to

Nyāya, is only a case of misjudging or mispredication. Here the philosopher is only interested to bring out the logic of the idea of error. His account does not refer to perceptual errors and illusion. The problem is logical and is mistakenly presented to be psychological or ontological because of the material mode of speech through which the arguments are actually presented. It is only with the later Naiyāyikas who introduce the *jñāna-lakṣaṇa pratyakṣa* to interpret the perceptual errors like shell-silver, etc., the logical thesis of *Anyathākhyāti* is unfortunately clouded. The early Nyāya argument, at least in this context, is purely formal without having any prior commitment to any form of ontology. With little modifications the central arguments, that are developed by *Viparītakhyātivāda* and *Sadasatkhyātivāda*, can also be shown to be the instances of formal type. In these cases too, the logical analysis of the concept of error is pursued and error is conceded to be due to mispredication.

(*ii*) *Anirvacanīyakhyāti* : It is indeterminateness (*anirvacanīyatva*) which is argued by the Advaitins to be the special feature of the judgement. They agree with the Naiyāyikas that error is due to mispredication. Only they, by further analysis of the nature of each judgement, attempt to show that there is always logical possibility of mispredication in case of each judgement. If my describing the present referent as silver is a case of misdescription in the sense that the silver predicate does not belong to the referent then equally my describing the referent as shell can be argued to be a case of possible misdescription. To describe 'this' as shell is also to attribute shell-characteristic on this. I can never know the thing without describing or characterising. And there is always the chance of mistake in describing. Hence all descriptive judgements, by definition, turn out to be fallible. They may at best presuppose the referent but cannot reveal the referent. Hence their truth-valve cannot be determined. For Saṃkara, since no language can be possible without employing class-concepts, description and predication, etc., reality (*Brahman*—the logical referent) cannot be comprehended by means of language or judgemental way of knowing.

The post-Śaṁkarites very often talk of *anirvacanīya* in terms of *bhāvarūpa*. The modern scholars, while interpreting

Anirvacanīyakhyāti, explain *bhāvarūpa* as something positive meaning thereby that for Advaita the content of error must refer something real and not absolute void or *śūnya*. This has been emphasised in order to distinguish Advaitism from *Śūnyavāda*. But the term, *bhāvarūpa* cannot mean anything positive. Because in that case *bhāvarūpa* and *bhāva* would be the same. The nature of the judgement is such that following Advaita logic we can neither say it to be positive (*bhāva*) nor negative (*abhāva*) nor both positive and negative but neither. The judgement merely has a semblance of being true in the sense of correctly describing but actually it always fails in describing by adding certain names and forms foreign to reality. The modern scholars seem to be interpreting *bhāvarūpa* as something positive because of their unnecessary bias for an ontological rendering which is completely foreign to the epis e-mological discussion of error.

A very similar approach is also advanced both by the Mādhyamikas and the Yogācāras, though with an altogether defferent fomulation. The Asatkhyātivādins though advance a theory of judgement which declares all judgements to be false (*asat*) instead of indeterminable yet the central line of argument almost remains the same. For, both of them stand as the critic of language and clearly repudiate any relation between language and reality. That error is due to conceptualisation (*kalpanā*) is to be noted in this connection. The Yogācāras who deny the external reality and admit the internal idea also clearly adhere to this form of reasoning of repudiating the use of concepts. The general features like cowness have no objective reality (to any schools of Buddhism) and are entirely due to the nature of thought.[7]

All these different philosophies have a common tone in so far as their views on the nature of the judgement is concerned. It is the finding of erroneous character in each judgement from a logical point of view which, of course, subsequently led them to different metaphysical speculation. If for some the logically referent of all judgements becomes absolute real (*Brahman*), for others it is unreal (*Asat* or *Śūnya*) and for others it is idea (*Vijñāna*). But these different revising metaphysical conclusions do not, in any way, affect the logical nature of the argument which is fundamentally adhered to by

each of them. The different arguments that they advance in respect of their theories of error, are more plausible only when those are seen through this logical analysis without any prior prejudice to some form of ontological commitment.

(*iii*) *Satkhyāti* : In opposition to the Advaita theory of error, the Rāmānujāites advance a radically opposite theory according to which all judgements, whatsoever, can never be completely fall short of the referent. What is asserted, in any judgement has definitely an objective basis. In this sense there cannot be complete misdescription or mispredication. All attributes are, according to this logical analysis, objectively real. Hence there is no possibility of error in the sense of lack of objective counterpart. The different objects of reference are already related in reality and it is only our limited intelligence which ordinarily takes the everrelated objects as not being related. The shell is not absolutely non-silvery. Nor the silver is absolutely non-shelly. There is, however, contradiction in holding shell as distinguished from silver to be silver; but there is no contradiction in holding shell to be silver if shell is already intrinsically related (*aprthak siddhi*) with silver.

Whatever may be the ultimate fate of this nature of logical reasoning, to whatever revisionary form of metaphysics it may lead seems to me an irrelevant point. It is a matter of pity that argument of this theory is never analysed from the logical side and different modern scholars have either not discussed it at all or have presented the argument as a hand-maid to certain pseudo-scientific theory like quintuplication (*pancikaraṇa*).

The theory of *Akhyāti*, as advanced by the Prābhākaras, the early Sāṁkhyites and some Jaina's view on error seem to be not very much different from that of these Rāmānujāites so far as the logical nature of the argument is concerned. Apart from certain doctrinal differences the argumentative side almost remains same. It may be admitted, however, that *Akhyāti-vāda* cannot always restrict itself to the logical nature of the judgement, and very often is found to be confusing between logical problem with that of psychological one. It is, probably, because of this the theory attempts to answer in more detail the question, *viz.*, 'What is the empirical source

of error?' and very often takes this answer to be of logical significance.*

References

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3. Uddyotakara, *Nyāya Vārttika*, Calcutta : Bib. Indica Series, 1907, p. 26.
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5. *Vide*: P.K. Gode and C.G. Karve (ed.) V. S. Apte's *The Practical Sanskrit Dictionary*, Vol. III, Poona 1958, p. 641.
6. "Sarvam jñānaṁ dharminyabhrāntam, prakāre tu viparyayaḥ' *Sapta-Padārthi*, Vizianagaram Sanskrit Series, p. 25.
7. Prof. M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, London, p. 221, within bracket mine.

*An earlier version of the paper was presented to a symposium on the same theme in the second conference of All Orissa Philosophy Association, 1970 and the paper was subsequently published in the *Proceedings* of the Association.

CHAPTER THREE

JÑĀNA : ITS USAGE

In Indian philosophy, the term '*jñāna*' is used in a wider sense. It includes all judgements irrespective of the question of truth and falsehood. Both *yathārtha-jñāna* and *ayathārtha-jñāna* (*mithyā jñāna*) are accepted as instances of *jñāna*. Even philosophers like Prabhākara for whom all judgements are valid (*sarvam eva vijñānam samicīnam*) interpret the usual cases of false judgement as only instances of no judgement (*akhyāti* or *viveka akhyāti* or *bheda agraha*). Kumārila, who unlike Prabhākara admits false judgement, classifies *apramāṇa* (invalid knowledge) into error (*mithyā-jñāna*), dout (*saṁśaya*) and ignorance (*ajñāna*).[1] Here one finds that even *ajñāna* is regarded as a case of knowledge, though invalid knowledge.

Disputes are quite likely with regard to the inclusion of doubt and ignorance as instances of invalid knowledge. As in case of doubt, there is the presence of oscillation and indecision. There is no sense of assertion in it which can either be accepted as valid or invalid. So also, in case of ignorance, there is simply absence of knowledge—whether valid or invaiid. Accordingly, to say absence of knowledge as invalid knowledge would be self-contradictory.

Whatever may be the logical status of the specific views advanced in this connection by Prabhākara or Kumārila, one thing seems to be quite clear that according to general Indian philosophical usage the term '*jñāna*' can never mean the same as what is meant by the English term 'knowledge'. Knowledge means always true judgement and a false judgement as instance of knowledge is not admissible. The other Indian philosophical term '*pramā*'[2] or valid knowledge which is used

for *yathārtha jñāna* (true judgement), can only be treated as parallel of what is said in English language 'knowledge'. True judgement or vaild knowledge (*pramā*) stands for the correct description of the referent and false judgement or invalid knowledge (*apramā*) does not truly characterize the referent.

In this connection a question is raised. If *jñāna* is not necessarily *pramā*, then by what process or by whose help is it turned into *pramā*? The question is answered by saying that *jñāna* after being approved through the process of *pramāṇa* is designated as *pramā*. When a piece of *jñāna* is authenticated through the sources like perception, inference, etc. it is accepted as valid knowledge.

But again, here, the classical Indian philosophers raise an interesting issue. The issue is : whether the *jñāna* which is authenticated through *pramāṇa* and is known to be true contains validity in itself or validity is supplied to it from without. Those who support, in this connection, the theory of self-validity of knowledge (*svataḥ prāmāṇyavāda*) argue that if *jñāna* is not self-valid, then validity even cannot be established through extraneous conditions. It is, however, true that preception, inference, etc. are the means of valid knowledge. But, as means, they only make valid character of knowledge explicit. The *jñāna* which is known to be valid must have to inherently possess the character of validity. To put simply, *jñāna* is self-valid. But those who, on the other hand, hold the theory of *parataḥ prāmāṇyavāda* maintain that validity is extrinsic to *jñāna*. They argue, if validity is already intrinsic to *jñāna* then there would not have been any scope for doubting or critically examining any piece of *jñāna*. And, moreover, different *pramāṇas*, in that case, would not be very much necessary.

Here, it is not my purpose either to defend or to offend any of the above-mentioned theories. It can be marked that since *jñāna* in Indian philosophy is not necessarily accepted as true (or, truth is not taken as the defining mark of *jñāna*), the possibility of *mithyā-jñāna* is not ruled out. And, because of the possibility of *jñāna* being false, legitimately it is asked, whether a particular piece of *jñāna* is true or false. Is the truth intrinsic to *jñāna* or is it extrinsic? It seems, this question would not have been raised, if *jñāna*, from the outset, would

have been defined in terms of truth. If truth is the defining mark of *jñāna*, then a piece of *jñāna* being false is cleanly ruled out. If truth, on all occasions, is necessarily related to *jñāna*, then the issue whether truth is intrinsic or it is extrinsic to *jñāna* becomes redundant.

Now it may be asked as to why the classical Indian philosopher is so much interested in using the term '*jñāna*' in such a wider sense of including true as well as false judgements. In some quarter, a remark is made that classical Indian philosophical discussion is carried on through Sanskrit language whose linguistic structure is different from that of English language. It is because of this, perhaps, that Indian philosopher accepts *mithyā-jñāna* as an instance of *jñāna*.

But such a remark does not seem to be convincing. For, while one analyses the linguististic structure of Sanskrit language, one does not find that *jñāna* can be both true as well as false. In Sanskrit, the words like *jñāna, ajñāna* and *mithyā-jñāna* are logically distinguished and are clearly separated. It is marked that within the semantic condition of this language, *ajñāna* and *mithya-jñāna* are negative in character while *jñāna* implies a positive sense.

It appears to me that the classical Indian philosopher, by adopting such a peculiar linguistic convention, redefines the existing ordinary use and thus brings out certain philosophical problems. So far as semantic condition is concerned, there appears to be no difference between the usages of the Sanskrit term '*jñāna*' and the English term 'knowledge'.*

References

1. *Vide* : *Śloka-Vārtika* (Chowkhamba), 2.54.
2. While most of the Indian philosophers use *pramā* in the sense of valid knowledge, some philosophers like Kumārila use *pramāṇa* in the sense of valid knowledge. *Vide Śloka Vārtika* 2.80.

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CHAPTER FOURTH

THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA : AN ANALYSIS

I

There are references to the doctrine of karma in the classical Indian philosophical literature. References are found starting from the Vedic scriptures down to the numerous commentaries which are later on composed on different systematic treatises. It is not proposed here to make a historical study of the doctrine of karma as found in different classical writings. It is also not the aim to discover some hitherto unknown truth about the doctrine. It is rather proposed here to advance a conceptual analysis of the doctrine of karma. The doctrine does not figure in the classical Indian philosophical discussions alone. It also plays a prominent role in Indian religious and cultural spheres. While advancing a conceptual analysis of the doctrine it is, however, not meant to undermine its importance either in religion or in culture. Such an analysis, it is hoped, will increase our understanding regarding the theoretical basis of the doctrine and also will help in advancing a proper estimation of the same.

Though karma means action in general, yet in the philosophical context it is regarded as the principle of law of conservation of moral values. It is said :

> "The Law of Karma applies to the realm of morality, the principle of cause and a regulated course of things."[1]

According to it, all actions of man which are performed with a desire for fruit thereof produce appropriate conse-

quences. That is, the amount of reward is proportionate to the nature of actions performed. According to the doctrine of karma there is no loss of the effect of work done and also nothing happens to a man except insofar as it is the consequence of his own work. It is found in Upanisad :

> "According as one acts, according as one conducts himself, so does he become. The doer of good becomes good. The doer of evil becomes evil. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by bad action".[2]

It is of course often observed that the person who is honest is faced with miseries whereas the person being dishonest gets all comforts and happiness. Ordinarily there seems to be no definite answer as to why a good man suffers and a bad man prospers. In this context, the advocates of karma first consider and then reject the alternative views. It may be suggested that it is just a matter of chance that such an unexpected event has happened. But this suggestion for ending the enquiry on the basis of chance is viewed as rationally not convincing. To take recourse to chance, the advocates of karma maintain, is rather to evade the problem than properly assessing it. The other view that such unexpected event happens because of certain unseen fate or because of God's whim is considered. But it is pointed out by the advocates of karma that this view is also unacceptable. A fatalistic or a theistic explanation affects the sense of human freedom. It is rationally never convincing to hold that man is a mere puppet in the hands of unseen fate or God.

Quite often the doctrine of karma has been advocated at the background of theistic formulation and it is asserted that there is nothing unreasonable to accommodate the conception of just God within karmic framework. The Visistadvaitins, for instance, are found to be both theists and also the advocates of karma. Even some have moved so far as to maintain that God's grace, in this context, is not regarded as an obstacle for the operation of the karmic principle but is viewed "as a legitimate and just gift from God to one who deserves it through the appropriate religious conduct".[3]

But it can be marked that such a view is acceptable only when one disregards the logical boundary between a moral and a religious conduct. That both of these, at certain quarter, get manifested simultaneously in an individual does not rationally at least justify the conclusion that both the conducts are non-different. A moral sense (at least so far as its ordinary conventional import is concerned) is not necessarily tied with a religious or theistic sense, unless and until one introduces a prescriptive element namely, attainment of moral beatitude and attainment of God's grace are one and the same. If the karmic principle is primarily set in the moral plane, it is perfectly then intelligible as being operative without the aid of theistic interruption. It is not simply an issue of whimsical God but even the introduction of a just God is found to be logically unnecessary. There is nothing improper if some one follows the tracts of karma sincerely with a moral conviction without depending upon God's grace or theistic sanction. Rather, on the contrary, it can also be held that religious conduct instead of facilitating is likely to obstruct the flow of morality because of its being bent upon obscure spiritual aspiration and thus being much away from moral consciousness. At least the karmic principle can be understood quite independently and there seems to be no logical necessity in linking it with religious background. In this connection Matilal seems to be right in holding : "In fact, the *karma* theory is independent of theism, and on a stronger interpretation it becomes opposed to theism of any form".[4]

It is, therefore, argued that nothing happens by chance or by the caprice of a whimsical God. Acceptance of any of these suggestions, it is held, involves irrationality and vagueness.

The advocates of karma maintain that all human suffering is due to some sin committed previously, if not in the present life then in some previous life. It is said that the merit of the doctrine of karma is that it guarantees human freedom and responsibility. Instead of depending on any unseen fate, it maintains that man alone is the maker of his own destiny. It is he and he alone who is responsible for his own situations. It is his past deeds which determine his present placement. It is

unjust to blame God for his sufferings consequent upon his activities performed in previous life. The sense of freedom is ensured in the manner that if a person wants to better his condition, he can do so by the performance of requisite karmas. Particular karmas give rise to particular consequences. It is claimed that by ensuring freedom, the doctrine of karma is based on moral foundations. It is said :

> "As a moral doctrine the conception of karma renders two services : it provides a theory of punishment and it offers an explanation of the apparent inequities of man's lot in life."[5]

From what has been stated before, it can be noted that the doctrine of karma has certain key-points for its formulation. It is held that as every event in the physical phenomena is determined by its cause. So every event that occurs in the life of man is due to his past karma. In other words, the doctrine of karma seems to be an extension of the principle of causation to the sphere of human activity in the moral context. It is said :

> "The law of karma is a moral law corresponding to the physical law of causation. Just as the law of cause and effect works in the physical world, the law of karma works in the moral world."[6]

It is further implied that all the differences and diversities encountered in the lives of men are to be explained rationally and nothing is to be left as due to chance or caprice of God. In order that the doctrine of karma is consistently applied to the sphere of human activity, it is assumed that there is a continuity of moral character. For this, it is held that man continues to remain under the process of karmic law not only within the present life but also beyond that. The doctrine of karma is thus related with the ideas of rebirth and transmigration.

II

Now it can be pointed out that the principle of causation is accepted insofar as it is significantly applied in the realm of experience. Though cause and effect are regarded to be relative concepts yet their uses are determined by means of experience. Empirically X is regarded to be the cause of Y if and only if X precedes Y and, X and Y uniformly occur together. It is experience alone that can conventionally and perhaps justifiably establish what causes what. But when it is said that the doctrine of karma seems to be an extension of the principle of causation to the sphere of human activity, certain difficulties start. The logical boundary in which the principle of causation is operated seems to be clearly different from the logical boundary in which the doctrine of karma is claimed to be significant. While the causal principle guides us in our empirical investigation, the doctrine of karma has been designed to explain a human problem from a moral point of view. To the question why a good man suffers and a bad man prospers, answer has been provided by the doctrine that it is because of the past bad actions, the good man suffers and for past good actions, the bad man prospers. Nobody else but man alone is responsible for his success or failure. But while X is the cause of Y or Y is the effect of X are usually determined by investigating the required observable phenomena, such is never the case with regard to the suffering of a good man or the prosperity of a bad man. Of course it can be marked that though causality is one of the most dependable principles adopted in the sphere of empirical investigations yet it is widely accepted in recent times that in the sub-atomic level, the principle of causality is not operative. This clearly shows that in scientific enquiry of the physical phenomena, nothing is assumed with a sort of *a priori* necessity. The enquiry is rather open and does not seem to have any prior commitment. But there seems to be on the other hand an implication of *a priori* necessity in the formulation of the doctrine of karma. Even if it is not found that a troubled man (who is quite good and innocent) commits any fault, the doctrine of karma is not given up. Rather it is advocated that the person concerned must have committed certain fault in his past life

for which he is now suffering. That means the doctrine of karma is never given up whether the world conforms to our expectation or not. But it is not that way sacrosanct so far as causal principle is concerned.[7]

Critics have found it difficult to accept the claim that the doctrine of karma ensures human freedom. It, according to them, involves rather a fatalistic explanation of human conduct. But the supporters of karma maintain that since man is given in this scheme full scope to choose any course of action, good or bad, there is no valid reason to hold that he is not free. No unseen fate or invisible God controls his destiny; but he himself is responsible for his own lot. Hiriyanna, in this connection, writes :

> "When therefore we ask whether belief in karma does not result in fatalism, all that we mean is whether it does or does not preclude self-determination. That it does not is evident, because the doctrine traces the causes which determine an action to the very indvidual that acts.'"[8]

It is action which he performs determines the result which he is to obtain. He can hope to redress his sufferings by performing the requisite karmas. But is this defence unquestionable? If, according to the doctrine of karma, my present lot is entirely due to my past actions then my hope or intention or such other mental states are also determined by past deeds. And I cannot but think in that particular manner in which the result of previous action dictates. If the person is a sinner in the previous life and his thoughts and deeds are all vicious then by the logic of karma one is to validly conclude that as his present physical state is determined by the past action so also his mental state at the present life is determined by the past mental thought. In fact one finds stories in the ancient Indian scriptures that what a person desires to be in the future life, he is supposed to be that in the so called future life. Thus following the doctrine of karma, one can say that a person cannot change his being from a vicious state to a virtuous one at the present life; for both his physical and mental states are predetermined by the past. And, in this sense, the claim of

freedom within the sphere of karma does not seem to be unquestionable.

If what one performs is only an expression of one's character and conduct which is already predetermined then the doctrine of karma seems to be not entirely different from fatalism. As a matter of fact Matilal, in this connection, observes :

> "...the law of *karma* which was originally formulated to oppose fatalism and encourge free-will became later on a plea for disguised fatalism. The blind force of *Niyati* easily stole into the system under the guise of the 'unseen' forces (*adṛsta*) of actions perpetrated in previous births".[9]

Of course recently attempt has been made to meet this criticism by holding the view that within the karmic framework "man is determined by his past but only *partially*. There is necessity, but there is freedom too : we are the products of our past, but the makers of our future".[10] But it is still not clear as to how much or what exactly is meant here by this term : *partially*. In what sense does determination of past not determine the future? Does it satisfactorily establish that because of the past vicious activities the present bodily and mental states have become adversely affected and yet there is freedom available to the individual to improve the present lot to a better one? Now, if both mental and bodily states are products of past activities then what else remains which is free from all karmic influences and is free to operate in future? Is it self or *atman*? But self, it is held, is not affected by karmic principle and is therefore regarded as absolutely inactive (*akarta*) and is thereby said as untouched by the karmic influence. So, in this context it becomes highly unclear and exceedingly difficult to maintain that the person is morally responsible for his lot and is partially determined by his past life and yet is partially free to operate for future life. Hence even if one concedes that the doctrine of karma was originally formulated to encourage freedom yet its theoretical basis, as has been analysed above, does not at all make room for such concession.

It has been claimed that the doctrine of karma has been designed to explain rationally all the differences and diversities

encountered in the lives of men. The suggestion that differences are due to chance or due to caprice of God rejected by the advocates of karma on the ground that such explanation is not rationally convincing and is rather vague and mysterious. But in what way, it may be asked, is the explanation by means of the doctrine of karma rational and free from vagueness? If one cannot find any good reason as to why an innocent man suffers then the suggestion that he must have committed certain fault in his previous birth for which he is now suffering seems to be shrouded with further vagueness. It is, of course, immoral to accuse somebody, else for one's own fault. I am, however, responsible for the undesirable actions which I have committed. If I am negligent about my own study then it is no good blaming my teacher for the poor result in the examination. But, it can be clearly marked that defects here can easily be identified both by me and by others. Where defect is marked, there responsibility is fixed. But where this is not possible in any sense of the term, is it not too much to fix responsibility? It is not clear when one maintains by believing in karma that somebody is in a bad state in the present life because of his own faults committed in the past life. What actions he committed in the past life are neither identifiable by him nor by anybody else. In this context the following observation of the critic is notable :

> "If a man is rewarded, he must know what exactly he has done which is worth such recognition; if a penalty is given him, he must know what he has done which deserves such a penalty. It does not help a man morally if he is rewarded or punished without knowing what exactly he has done worthy of such treatment."[11]

It has been held that though "memory of the past may no doubt help us under certain circumstances in making the necessary amendments in our conduct, but it is also possible that it may become a hindrance to our progress".[12] It is argued that memory of the past lives would create confusion and thereby would obstruct future progress. But is it also not the case that lack of memory regarding the activities of the

past life and without having any manageably definite idea about the workings of karmic law operating in several births put oneself in a state of moral indecision? It is not definite at least in the present context which course of action is morally sanctioned and which is not. Once the moral issues are extended to such trans-human and trans-psycho-physical realm, the whole discussion seems to be somewhat obscure and vague. Moral justice obviously demands that not only a person's past conduct be considered in determining his present status but also the person in some manner be given scope to have the knowledge of the past so that he gets a chance to improve. In this connection the researches of Freud has been cited to show "how great an influence our past can have on us even if we may not be conscious of it".[13] But influence of past is emphasised by the psychologist only in so far as the present life-span is concerned and lack of memory is admissible only within the present life and not beyond that. It does not in any way support or establish the occurrence of previous life and never indicates the extension that one's previous life and its activities morally determine the present life even if the person concerned does not have any sense of it. Such a venture into the unknown past is neither validated by the Freudian research nor does it seem to be rationally undisputable.

III

The advocates of karma emphasise on the continuity of moral character. It is held that man continues to remain under the process of karmic law not only within the present life but also beyond that. Now it may be pointed out that the talk regarding continuity of moral character is quite significant within a definite scope and limit. It is perfectly legitimate on the part of the judge to pass judgement against criminal, once the crime has been properly evidenced and established. It is absurd on the part of the criminal to defend his case by maintaining that he is now a different man and is other than the person who committed the crime some time before. The judgement is advanced with the rational conviction that there is continuity of character throughout. But difficulties start when one tries to

understand the doctrine of karma through continuity of moral character during several births. The issue regarding continuity of moral character is quite intelligible within human plane. It is, as said earlier, quite significant to maintain that I am morally responsible for my own fault and it is immoral to accuse someone else for the fault which I committed. But the issue becomes unclear when it is said that dead man is responsible for his karmas which he performed while he was alive and therefore he is again to take birth in future for obtaining fruits in response to his past karmas. In other words, does man continue to be a man when he is dead and can it be significantly maintained that there is a continuity or moral character from the embodied state to the disembodied state ? Moreover, is it morally proper to explain man's present condition as due to certain action performed in certain previous life of which neither the person nor anybody else is aware of?

Of course here one may defend the doctrine of karma by saying that there is a memory linkage between present and past life, though that is submerged in the sub-conscious. There is now enough "experimental evidence that a great deal of our present life is beyond our normal power of recall and yet under hypnosis it may be proved that complete memory of our life exists in detail".[14] Similarly it can also be said though normally the person is not able to remember his past deeds performed in certain previous life and there is no self-consciousness to that effect yet this need not conclusively establish that there is no past life or the person has not performed any such deeds. It is sufficient to assume memory of such past events as being present in the subconscious and they may express themselves in the self-conscious states as innate dispositions. Let us pause a little. Can there be a fruitful discourse of morality being extended from the conscious level to unconscious level ? Is it morally proper to hold a person responsible for his subconscious thoughts? Supposing one agrees that many events which we do not normally recall in our conscious states are not as a matter of fact fictitious and it is also not the case that there is absolutely no trace of such events in our mind. Even if they are not found in the conscious states, they may be there in the sub-conscious states and under suitable conditions they may be raised up from the sub-conscious to the conscious

states. But all these, even if granted, only establish that within the span of present life, something which is forgotten and is not recalled under normal circumstances, can be recalled if favourable circumstances occur. And recalling here is not imply dependent on me but also upon the external circumstances. It, as already indicated before, does not thereby necessarily justify the conclusion that memory traces not only include all the events of the present life but also of a life beyond. The argument that memory traces might also continue at a sub-conscious level even in disembodied or in other-bodied state rather seems to be a matter of baseless assumption. And this does not, it seems, satisfactorily meet the critic's remark that "an immoral element is introduced into the doctrine when it is said that a man is punished for sins which he committed in a former life and of which he has no recollection".[15]

It may be argued here that there is nothing unreasonable in assuming rebirth and transmigration. What is wrong in conceiving the logical possibility of being disembodied or being born in another body in another situation ? If this is logically conceivable then it can also be reasonable to conceive that a person continues being disembodied and he is to bear fruit of his actions which he performed in his previous embodied state. This point of view is based on the assumption that man is not essentially the living psycho-physical conscious being but a conscious soul (Jiva) which transmigrates from one physical body to other and thus actions performed by him in one bodied state have their consequences in a different bodied state.

Indeed any philosophical analysis on the concept of personal identity has never established beyond doubt that person in order to identity himself must require continuity of physical body. Some philosophers have thought this to be not absurd and meaningless to conceive person as being disembodied or being housed in a different body, even though as a matter of fact this never happens. But the question here is; to what extent does this analysis of personal identity vindicate the ground of the doctrine of karma ? It can be seen that the belief in karma virtually rests not on the mere imaginability or logical conceivability of past or future birth but on its actual

existence. There is throughout an implicit factual claim so far as reaping the consequences of the karmas of past life is concerned. The person who believes in karma can never be satisfied if one simply points out not actuality but possibility of past or future life. His claim is rather on the actual occurrence of rebirth and transmigration. There is clearly a factual claim and the assertion that there must have been past life and the action performed by a person in the past life have actually given rise to the present state of existence. Once the claim of the doctrine is seen through this point of view, its weakness can be noticed.

Of course some have referred, in this context, to various investigations undertaken by the para-psychologists. Ian Stevenson, for instance, maintains that result of psychical investigations of certain cases of claimed memories of previous lives are suggestive of reincarnation.[16] It is reported that the minds which operate in the mediumistic trance, purporting to be the spirits of the departed, at times supply information which the medium could not have obtained under normal process. Such cases of trans utterances are apparent indication of survival and communication after death. But such cases are also interpreted by the help of psychical research as "meaningful hallucinations". The source of such hallucinations is claimed to be telepathic. Viewing all these, Hick has remarked :

> "...ghosts may be 'psychic footprints' a kind of mental trace left behind by the dead but, not involving the presence or even continued existence of those whom they represent."[17]

Now supposing one does not agree to the interpretation referred to above that cases of claimed memories of previous lives are cases of "meaningful hallucinations". Let one agree that there are cases (even if very few) when a person is able to supply informations which he could not have obtained under any normal process. Does this necessarily imply that there is reincarnation ? Does it demonstrate that life continues beyond death and undergoes a process of reincarnation ? I think not. Of course, memory here is helpful; but is it

sufficient ? Is the admittance of reincarnation the only possible explanation in this context ? Can one not maintain with equal speculative force that after the death of a person at one place and at one time another is born in a different place who is though displaying very much similar characteristics like the former yet is never the same one ? The instances of memory do not prove beyond doubt that both the persons are one and the same. At least nothing has been decisively argued against one rival view that the two persons are similar but not same. The so called cases of memory of previous birth do not necessarily prove continuity of character. It is not warranted to maintain that character that a person exhibits is based on its previous action performed. There are rival speculations according to which conduct and character are injected into the person either by some mechanical computerised process (mechanistic hypothesis) or by some divine being (spiritualistic hypothesis). And there is no special argument offered by the advocates of karma that rival hypotheses are undemonstrable while the doctrine of karma is demonstrable. It may be noted here that the undemonstrable character of the doctrine of karma in case of Advaita Vedanta is affirmed by Eliot Deutsch.[18]

Moreover, does the acceptance of the doctrine of reincarnation entail the doctrine of karma ? It is true that karma implies the continuity of life through several births. But the reverse is not necessary. In fact there are many who believe in reincarnation but do not subscribe to the doctrine of karma. In order to believe in rebirth, one is not logically committed to the point that a person is reborn in order to reap the consequences of his past deeds. Suffering has also been viewed as not necessarily due to one's own fault but due to certain extraneous factors. To insist for the point that suffering must be due to person's own previous action is to make a further controversial assumption that all sufferings are punitive in nature.

IV

But it may also be marked that difficulties crop up only when an attempt is made to evaluate the doctrine of karma

from the empirical or factual point of view, whereas the doctrine has been formulated from certain other considerations. To seek for factual justification of the doctrine of karma is perhaps to approach the whole issue in a wrong way. The justification for the belief in the karmic law may be that it makes the lives of those who believe in it quite meaningful. At least lives appear to them significant in a manner which otherwise would not have become possible. The advocates of karma maintain that belief in karma facilitates the performance of virtuous actions. It encourages man to prepare a better future for himself. The doctrine of karma being founded on the sense of morality supplies a feeling of peace, security and satisfaction in the minds of those who are its believers. From this point of view the doctrine may be regarded as strongly persuasive, inducive and directive for leading a disciplined life. It has a deep exhortational significance. The merit of this interpretation rests on the point that the doctrine of karma, in order that it may be acceptable, does neither require any factual evidence nor rational justification in the sense of proof, but its efficacy depends on the way it functions. To put it differently the significance of the belief in karma lies in the effects it produces. It is quite acceptable in the moral plane when it is held that one should be responsible for his own actions and decisions. Instead of putting blame on others one should first be free from all blemishes. This type of suggestion seems to have an air of freshness. In sincerely believing the doctrine of karma, one is adopting a mode or perhaps 'form of life' to use an Wittgensteinian expression. The significance of the doctrine lies in the language game (moral) where it is formulated. It is unwarranted to demand for its empirical or factual significance. To adopt a form of life is to adopt one attitude and in that sense the doctrine of karma has importance.

It is the very insistence for preservation of selfish desires which is the root factor for causing distress and unhappiness. Karma with craving or desire is critically of course viewed in the traditional writings of India and the moral suggestion that is hinted thereby is to inculcate a reasonable attitude i.e. freeing oneself from ill-balanced selfish and sensuous desire. Even the

idea of continuity and thereby the urge to be reborn which is backed by the sense of lust and self-indulgence bring torment. This is forcefully and perhaps convincingly advocated by the Buddhist philosophers who though do not admit any permanent self or *ātman* yet subscribe to the doctrine of karma in the moral plane.[19] Karma, in the moral perspective, is quite plausible in so far as it stresses on human responsibility. Instead of unnecessarily finding fault with others if one becomes self-critical then much of mis-understanding and confusion are over. An unethical life is based on some sort of craving for selfish desire and greed which bring at last sorrows and sufferings. The rational basis of moral doctrine has its own autonomy and its value or significance is judged not in terms of truth or falsity but in terms of the effect it produces upon the individual concerned. There is, therefore, no necessity for defending the doctrine of karma by means of unnecessary and sometimes inconsistent speculations about the transempirical existence of the person, its past life and reincarnation. Karma seems to be definitely more persuasive when it is accepted with a background of pure and unadulterated regard for pursuing a moral life than with a preconceived desire that it would lead to better consequences so far as the individual is concerned. This is emphatically suggested in the *Gita* doctrine of *niskama* karma which is quite parallel to the Buddhistic ideology at least so far as this present issue is concerned. In this regard karma seems to have undoubtedly a great humanistic appeal rather than looking for a support from obscure dehumanised source.*

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CHAPTER FIVE

ANĀTMA AND KARMA IN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

I

Buddhist philosophy is basically non-substantive. As against the Vedāntic substantive outlook Buddhism advocates non-substantive outlook. It does not subscribe to the view that there is a pure substance (either spirit or matter). While the Vedāntic point of view aims at establishing something immutable (kūtastha nitya), Buddhistic approach seems to be critical about that throughout.

There are abundant references in the whole of Buddhist literature subscribing to the view of non-substantivity. Majjhima Nikāya mentions that the Buddha condemned Self as unreal something only imagined by the dull (kevalo paripūro bāladhammo).[1] In Milinda Pañho we find Nāgasena saying : "Just as the 'chariot' on account of its having all these things the pole, the axle, the wheels, the spokes, the framework, the yoke and the goad—comes under the generally understood symbol the designation in common use, of 'chariot' similarly 'soul' or 'individuality' or 'being' or 'personality' is only a generally understood symbol, the designation in common use, for the five skandhas. There is no permanent soul involved in the matter."[2] Vasubandhu, in his Abhidharmakośa, argues against the existence of soul. It is only an unbroken continuity of momentary forces which is believed to be a unity and to which substantive is misappropriately applied. The Sautrāntikas, it is said, "did not believe in the existence of any substance apart from its attributes".[3] Asaṅga, in his Mahāyānasūtralaṅ-

kāra, maintains that there is no self as substance.[4] Candrakirti, one of the great Mādhyamikas, holds self to be the cause of all miseries and a Yogi should deny its ultimate reality.[5]

From all these it can be noted that whether in early or in later phases of Buddhistic philosophy the denial of substantive self has been accepted without any hesitation. The anti-attā doctrine or the denial of self-substance is the most distinguishing feature of Buddhist philosophy. This is perhaps the ground because of which it is held, "all the remaining Buddhist doctrine may more or less be found in other philosophic systems and religions, but the Anattā Doctrine has been clearly and unreservedly taught only by the Buddha".[6] It is, however, to be marked that anātmavāda need not mean only the denial of spiritual substance. It is opposed to any substantive outlook, be it spiritual or material. As when one analyses mental phenomena (nāma) one does not find soul, so also when one analyses physical phenomena (rūpa) one does not come across what is called as matter. "Both soul and matter exist only as complexes and neither is a single self-contained entity."[7]

There are of course, found differences of considerable magnitude among the Buddhists on number of specific issues. While the Hinayanist interprets, for example, pratītyasamutpāda as appearance of evanescent momentary things (pratipratirityānām vināśinām samutpāda), the Mahāyānist interprets it not as a temporal sequence of the things between which there is a causal relation, but as dependence of one concept on another (hetupratyayāpekso bhāvānāmutpādah pratityasamutpādārthah). If for the Yogācāras the concept of vijñāna is primary, for the Mādhyamikas the concept of śūnyatā is primary. But in spite of such differences nairātmyāvāda, as we have found is more or less or accepted by Buddhists of all varieties.

II

It has been widely maintained that the Buddhist philosophy is not opposed to the doctrine of karma. As various darśanas based on Vedic/Vedāntic foundations subscribe to a general theory of karma so also it is said that Buddhists, in spite of

the rejection of the doctrine of self, accept karma. As a matter of fact one finds references to the doctrine of karma in Buddhist literature. For instance, in Milinda Pañho one finds Nāgasena saying that it is through a difference in karma that men are not all alike, but some long lived, some short lived ... ...[8] The Buddha also once, it is said, consoled one disciple having severe wound saying that his suffering was due to his past karmas.[9]

But the problem is : how is acceptance of karmavāda coherently fitted with anātmavāda, if there is no enduring substance as self then who is there to reap the consequences of certain karmas. The doctrine of karma seems to have a necessary presupposition of a permanent soul or self. Ṛg Veda views evil found in the present life due to the evil action committed in the previous life.[10] It means continuity of individual through different births. Bṛhdāraṇyaka Upaniṣad maintains that a person becomes good by good deeds and bad by bad deeds.[11]

Whatever may be the specific version of karmavāda in different Vedic/Vedāntic philosophies in a general and broad sense karmavāda is, however, grounded on the idea of a persistent individual bearer who reaps the consequences of the actions done by him on past occasions. That is why critics like Deussen holds : "This karman must have in every case an individual bearer and that is what Upanisads call the ātman and what the Buddhists inconsistently deny".[12]

Attempts, of course, have been made to avoid such criticism by pointing out that though there is no admittance of a permanent substantive soul as remaining unaltered throughout the changes yet the momentary different states or events (falling under one pattern or what is called saṃtāna) are not viewed as fully different. It is true that a person is not always same, yet he is not completely different. Even if it is agreed that here in Buddhistic framework what one does, the same one does not reap the consequences ; he who gets the result since is not altogether different from the preceding member, there is, it is thought, no impropriety in accommodating karmavāda within Buddhist philosophy. Hiriyanna remarks : "...if there can be action without an agent, there can well be transmigration with-

out a transmigrating agent...the karma belonging to an 'individual' may transmit itself at death as it does during life; and though the dead person does not revive, another with the same disposition may be born in his stead...when a person dies, his character lives after him, and by its force brings into existence a being who though possessing a different form, is entirely influenced by it."[13] It is supposed by many that in Buddhism there is no soul which transmigrates but only the character which transmigrates and continues.[14]

There are, however, some difficulties pointed out by the critics regarding this anātma doctrine of the Buddhists. Problems regarding identity, self-identity, memory, recognition, etc. are raised by the opponents and attempts are also made by the Buddhists to defend their point of view.[15] My purpose here is, of course, not to elaborate such criticisms and replies but only to consider and evaluate the arguments that are often advanced to accommodate the doctrine of karma within the Buddhist fold of anātmavāda.

First of all it is not quite clear as to how there can be action without agent. If the two expressions are understood as relative ones (at least that is how these are interpreted in the convention) then obviously in absence of any agent it would be more appropriate to have descriptive term motion than action. However, this is a matter of linguistic preference. The problem is : how to conceive transmigration without transmigrating agent. The suggestion that it is not the soul but character which transmigrates does not at all become helpful. Because any sort of continuity either in terms of soul or in terms of character cannot be possible on the ground that both have some sort of substantive implication which the Buddhistic framework cannot accommodate. If another person is born with same disposition then at least there is identity of disposition so far as the former and the latter persons are concerned. That means something in the sense of disposition remains same and unaltered and this is obviously against the Buddhistic framework of dynamism and non-substantivity. One is reminded here of Śāntarakṣita's statement that motion itself is real (cala-bhāva svarūpa). Furthermore, if karmavāda is grounded with the idea of continuity and that the same person is reborn to reap the

consequences of his past deeds then surely in Buddhistic context it becomes somewhat difficult to adopt karma where it is conceded that there is no identity. Moral responsibility can be meaningfully applied if some basis of identity is already granted. That is why in the Vedic/Vedāntic philosophies jīva is conceived as remaining same and unchanged though body, mind etc. are changed. It is the jīva who is conceived as the performer of all karmas and it is therefore he who is said to have reaped the consequences of all his past karmas. In the event of denial of jīva or any kind of substantive entity karmavāda, at least in the manner in which it is presented in the Vedic fold, can hardly be treated as coherent so far as Buddhistic analytical basis is concerned.

It is said that according to the Buddhist point of view each phase of experience is made up into the next so that each successive phase has within it all the potentialities (Śakti) of the preceding one. Here potentiality need not be understood in the entitative sense, that something is transmitted from the preceding to the successive state. For that would give rise to a suggestion of permanency which is inadmissible in the Buddhistic framework. But, on the other hand, karmavāda is rooted with the idea of permanency. It is the same person who did the work and is therefore fit to get the result. Moral responsibility of the karmic type is obviously based upon identity and it cannot be explained in terms of similarity. Here the critical remark of Radhakrishnan is worth considering. He writes : "The persistence of the past in the present involved in the law of karma is not accounted for".[16] In other words, Buddhistic account of anātma cannot accommodate karma which is based upon the idea of persistence.

III

Again attempts have been made by modern scholars to interpret the doctrine of anātma in such a manner so that the difference between the Buddhistic and the Vedāntic approaches becomes manageably reduced. Once such a type of reduction succeeds it is, perhaps, thought in certain circle that karmavāda, in its usual traditional formulation, can easily be accommodated within the Buddhistic philosophical framework. C.D. Sharma

holds : "Nairātmyavāda Buddhism does not deny the existence of the true Ātman, the Pure Self which is Pure consciousness and which is the only reality".[17] According to him the Buddhists take ātman as jīvātman and thus the real self which is the ultimate reality is never touched by their criticism. He even quotes Ashvaghoṣa. Asaṅga and Shāntarakṣita who use terms like Ātman, Paramātman and Vishuddhātman respectively. Radhakrishnan, in a similar strain, remarks that the Buddha repudiates the popular delusion of the individual ego and disputes the reality of the surface self.[18]

Now before one considers whether such contemporary estimation of Buddhist point of view facilitates the acceptance of karmavāda it is more important, perhaps to assess such estimation in the light of the Buddhist explanation. As we have already discussed, the Buddhist anti-attā argument is not singularly directed against soul or self but against any form of substantive basis, be it spiritual or material. The illustrations through which such a point of view is explained are clearly both from psychical and material sources. Śāntideva holds that just as when one takes off layers of plantain trunk nothing remains so also search for self ultimately goes in vein.[19] It is thus the substantive basis irrespective of spirituality or materiality against which the Buddhist critical view is directed. In fact this analytical conclusion of nairātmya is of conceptual significance and therefore any attempt of understanding it either spiritually is rather to blur the legitimate distinction between a philosophical issue and a non-philosophical issue. It is nothing but misinterpreting a formal or conceptual issue by adopting the material mode of speech. Any kind of search for substance or essence or even ultimate is disparaged from the very outset. Buddhist anātmavāda is quite consistently linked up with impermanence and thus is opposed to all forms of eternalism (śāśāvatavāda). The Vedāntic view of reality as Self or Brahman rests upon eternalism and unchangeability. So obviously anātmavāda cannot by any reasonable sense imply the affirmation of reality of ātman which the Vedāntins propagate. Buddhist outlook is not simply directed against the ego-substance or what is otherwise termed as jīvātman but virtually is aimed at refuting any substantive basis. It is, however, not the purpose here to establish

whether the Buddhists are right or wrong in advocating the anattā doctrine but what can be viewed as the proper meaning of anattāvāda. Whether it can accommodate Vedāntin's ultimate reality like Brahman or Paramātman is the only point at issue. From the foregoing discussion it is quite clear that there seems to be no justification in interperting anattāvāda as refuting only jīvātman and implicitly affirming paramātman.

Besides we come across number of references in Buddhist literature which give us sufficient indication to support the view that Buddhistic framework can never justify the legitimacy of ātman. There is no reasonable ground to interpret the Buddha's silence[20] as confirming absolute ātman. C.D. Sharma maintains that the Laṅkāvatārasūtra identifies Reality with Tathāgatagarbha or Ālayavijñāna.[21] He takes Tathāgatagarva same as Absolute consciousness and in that way hopes to minimize the difference between Vedāntic absolutism and Buddhistic nairātmyavāda. But when one goes through the Laṅkāvatārasūtra one finds the Buddha saying "Our doctrine is not the same as the doctrine of those heretics; it is in consideration of the fact that the instruction of a philosophy which considered that there was no soul or substance in anything (nairātmya) would frighten the disciples, that I say that all things are in reality the tathāgatagarva. This should not be regarded as ātman. Just as a lump of clay is made into various shapes, so it is the non-essential nature of all phenomena and their freedom from all characteristics (sarvavikalpalakṣaṇavinivṛttam) that is variously described as the garva or the nairātmya (essencelessness). This explanation of tathāgatagarva as the ultimate truth and reality is given in order to attract to our creed those heretics who are superstitiously inclined to believe in the ātman doctrine."[22] These lines from the Laṅkāvatārasūtra clearly establish that Mahāyānist does not accept ātman and is one with the generally accepted Buddhistic stand of nairātmyavāda. Even garva is significantly interpreted here not as essence but as essenceless or nairātmya. Tathāgatagarva from this point of view, seems to be nothing but essencelessness and in this sense, perhaps, it is also identified as śūnyatā in this tradition.

Nāgārjuna, in his commentary on the Prajñāpāramitāsūtra, also clearly opts for the denial of ātman.[23] He holds that

Tathāgata or the Buddha sometimes talked about ātman only to detract from the path of nihilism (uccedavāda). Hence from all these references it is fairly clear that the Buddhist doctrine of nairātmya can have no compromise with the Vedānta doctrine of ātman. Anattāvāda is basically a non-substantive and non-essentialist doctrine and in this sense Mādhyamika's emphasis on sarva śūnyatā ornihsvabhāvatā is nothing but a legitimate extension and elaboration of the no-soul doctrine originally found in the early Buddhist sources. It is not, as some have viewed,[24] that the no-soul doctrine which is usually supposed to be central to Buddhist thought should have been relegated to a secondary place in the Mādhyamika philosophy. Even if it is found that certain later writers use such expressions like Ātman, Paramātman etc. in their work those need not justify the conclusion that logically both nairātmyavāda and ātmavāda have no difference and are on the same footing. Rather, as we have discussed, anātma doctrine being non-substantive is clearly in an opposite logical setting and any attempt of overlooking the vital difference between the two approaches seems to be pointless. It is, perhaps too much to conclude that Buddhism only disputes the reality of surface self.

Since Buddhist stand is clearly against substantivity it can be viewed as critical both about jīvātman and Paramātman. And at the event of denial of ātman of any formulation the acceptance of karma doctrine seems to be a difficult proposition. Moreover, the acceptance of ātman in the sense of Brahman need not be construed as a sort of logical support for the acceptability of karma doctrine. For, in the Vedic/Vedāntic formulation the karma doctrine is advocated only in so far as it is applicable to jīva and not in the sense that it is applicable to ātman which is conceived as ever pure and free from any obstacles including that of karma. Hence it seems, Buddhist denial of ego or jīva doubly confirms the inaccessibility of karma doctrine within Buddhistic framework.

Now from the foregoing discussion it appears that anātma and karma are logically exclusive in so far as the acceptance of one philosophically amounts the denial of the other. Buddhist philosophy, thus being viewed as non-substantive and non-essentialistic, cannot accept karmavāda in its usual formulation

and can claim to be logically consistent. The belief in karma doctrine amounts the prior acceptance of soul, its rebirth or transmigration which cannot find any place in the context of anātmavāda. Such a negative conclusion, though is found to be logically inescapable, is very likely to create a sense of uneasiness even among the advocates of Buddhism. Many would rather think this conclusion as very much radical. In view of profuse references about the belief in karma found at least in early Buddhist literature one may be led to think that perhaps because of overlooking certain vital issues such has become the outcome.

Let us pause a little. Early Buddhistic literature is conspicuously practical in its formulation. If everything is viewed as transitory and unsubstantial at least from theoretical point of view then the very popular desire to search for permanence of everything is no doubt discouraged. It is the very demand for preservation of selfish desires which is the root factor for causing distress and unhappiness. The belief in individual distinctness as well as feeling oneself as supreme over all others lies at the root of the presupposed idea that amidst all variations there is the permanency of self. With the rejection of individuality in the sense of egoity all selfish desires and impulses are also given up. Thus a theoretical stand point seems to have been linked up with the corresponding practical plane.

Some have suggested that following the traditional belief of his time the Buddha frequently referred in his discourses to worlds other than ours and to the beings supposed to inhabit them. That was partly a mode of popular expression which it would have been impossible to avoid for anybody using the language of the day.[25] If this suggestion is accepted then it may also be thought that the talk of karma in the context of anātma is mostly perhaps to cater to the sentiment of the contemporaneous mind even though theoretically both the doctrines cannot be maintained together. Indeed this may be the conclusion which one may feel as quite secured. But this, one should note, becomes possible only when one has to grant a serious gap between theory and practice in the context of Buddhism. Philosophical analysis, it is of course true, has its own boundary. It investigates the tracts of reason to what-

ever point it leads to. In this sense it is not empirical but conceptual. But this need not suggest that there is a strong impassable gulf or dichotomy between practice and theory. After all both the activities are human activities and one is not necessarily opposed to the other Philosophical analysis though different cannot simply be opaque as to what happens elsewhere. At least in the Buddhistic framework there is no reason to suppose for such a dichotomy. It is not for simple prudency that Buddhists talk of anātma in the theoretical level to meet the demand of reason and karma in the practical plane to appease the sentiment of the mass.

In the context of the discussion of karma it is found in Buddhist literature : "when a man's deeds are performed without covetousness, arise without covetousness and are occasioned without covetousness, then inasmuch as covetousness is gone these deeds are abandoned, uprooted, pulled out of the ground like a palmyra tree and become non-existent and not liable to spring up again in the future".[26] This expression clearly shows that karma with craving is critically viewed and the moral suggestion that is hinted thereby is to inculcate a reasonable attitude i.e. freeing oneself from illbalanced selfish and sensuous desire. Even the idea of continuity and thereby the urge to be reborn which is backed by the sense of lust and self-indulgence bring torment. The ardent desire to bring back the dead child to life is equally based upon muddled and confused idea of seeking for immortality and permanency. The craving for something which is impossible to find is that which causes suffering.

In the moral plane this account of karma is quite plausible in so far as it stresses on human responsibility. Instead of unnecessarily finding fault with others if one becomes self-critical then much of misunderstanding and confusion are over. Karma is not viewed in the mechanical but in the moral framework. It is advocated with the tacit assumption of freedom. We find in Aṅguttara Nikāya : "O priests, if any one says that a man must reap according to his deeds, in that case there is no religious life, nor is any opportunity offered for the entire extinction of misery. But if any one says, O priests, that a reward a man reaps accords with his deeds, in that case, O

priests, there is a religious life, and opportunity is afforded for the entire extinction of misery".[27] It has the clear suggestion that a sense of freedom goes side by side with a sense of effort and responsibility. This seems to be perfectly sound from moral reasoning point of view. So long as the empirical individual (neither jīva nor ātman in the Vedāntic sense) continues there is no cogent reason as to why he should shirk his own responsibilities. An unethical life is based on some sort of craving for selfish desire and greed which bring at last sorrows and sufferings.

What Buddhistic framework seems to have been emphasising is not cessation of suffering in a transempirical and dehumanised mystical platform. Because its analytical and rational approach seems to be clearly against all sorts of obscure thought constructions (niravaśeṣa kalpanākṣayarūpa). It is our false understanding that keeps us away from insight (prajñā) and we suffer. It is in this sense, perhaps, Nāgārjuna holds that there is no difference between world and nirvāṇa (na saṁsārasya nirvāṇāt kincidasti viśeṣaṇam, nanirvāṇāsya saṁsārāt kincidasti viśeṣaṇam).[28] The world does not vanish; only there is a change of attitude and understanding. What is propagated in the moral plane (karma) has no conflict with what is advocated in the metaphysical plane (anattā). The rational basis of moral doctrine has its own autonomy and its value or significance is judged not in terms of truth or falsity but in terms of the effect it produces upon the individual concerned. Buddhistic emphasis in correcting human attitude in the personal or individual level has, of course, a great social impact. Being properly understood and well tackled, it is quite effective in all ages. Both anātma and karma can thus be made well plausible in the human context. Is not Buddhism profoundly humanistic ?*

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CHAPTER SIX

*DAIVA AND PURUṢAKĀRA : A CRITICAL ESTIMATE**

Both the concepts of *Daiva* and *Puruṣakāra* have been widely discussed in the classical Indological literature. Not only *Vedas, Upanishadas* and subsequently developed philosophical treatises (inclusive of both orthodox and heterodox schools), but also in various religious and theological sources (like Epics, Mythologies, etc.) the references about both the concepts are numerous. When one goes through such references, one is likely to become somewhat perplexed. Because such accounts do not present one uniform rendering. In the popular context, for instance, *Daiva* means fate or destiny and *Puruṣakāra* stands for human effort. In this sense both the concepts are treated as different. In the major philosophical writings also *Daiva* connotes fatalism while *Puruṣakāra* is related with the well known doctrine of Karma. In some of the non-darsanika sources like *Ramayana, Mahabharata, Hitopadesa* and *Panchatantra* one finds not only different accounts of both the concepts, but at times definite emphasis has been laid towards their mutual opposition. Even *Pasupata* darsana which emphasises on the absolute freedom of *Isvara* does not on that account recognise the importance of karma and thus supports the view that *Daiva* and *Puruṣakāra* are fully different from each other.

But, it is argued side by side that there is also found another rendering according to which these two concepts are not regarded to be opposed to each other but as rather mutually complementary. *Daiva*, from this point of view, is taken to be

not unseen blind fate but is accepted as effect which is borne by one's own karma in an earlier life stored up as unseen forces either as merit or demerit and controlled by the *Devas*. According to this rendering, karma is used in the sense of *Dṛsta Karma* in the present life and *Daiva* is interpreted in the sense of *Adṛsta Karma* or unseen karma concerned in the mental basis in the form of dispositions and tendencies. It is said : "The Indian philosopher of the later age working in different spheres of thought made a systematic attempt to show that the so called *Daiva* or *Niyati* was in reality no other than Cumulative Force of our Primary Karmas kept in reserve in the subconscious or unconscious mind gathering strength from wrong accumulation and working for release into activity at the right moment or place".[1] In this connection the *Nyaya* philosophical treatise : *Nyayakasumanjali* has been referred to where much emphasis has been laid on the concept of *Adṛsta*. It has been thus suggested that *Daiva* is only the result of karmic forces kept in store for a span of time until the moment of maturation. The view of one Aurobindite Sadhaka has been mentioned in this context according to whom at the highest level (of consciousness) *Daiva* and *Puruṣakāra* are one and the same thing.[2]

Here, in the present discussion, attempt shall not be taken to either prove or disprove the claim that the concept of *Daiva* has been actually taken in the ancient indological literatures in the sense of effect of the unseen karma. It does not greatly matter at least in the context of philosophical appraisal whether such a rendering is or is not there. That might be an issue of textual and/or historical interest. What is important from the philosophical point of view to investigate and to enquire is rather to find out in what manner such an account of the concepts of *Daiva* and karma helps one to reach the conclusion that the two are not opposed to each other and they can be regarded as mutually supportive of each other. Granting that the concept of *Daiva* does not mean unseen fate but it means the result af *Adṛsta karma* of previous life, an analysis may be undertaken as to what extent such a notion of *Daiva* is compatible with the notion of *Puruṣakāra*.

Daiva, as has been popularly understood, implies some sort of unseen and hidden force either of God or of Nature

working from behind on the life of the individual. The individual is, of course, viewed as not free but is taken as completely controlled by the dictates of the unseen fate. From this point of view *Daiva* is interpreted as *Vidhilipih, Niyatih, Lalata* and so on. The workings of *Daiva* is outside the knowledge of the individual and thus it is beyond his comprehension. *Daiva,* in this sense, is irresistible. It comes all at once as an act of unknown and blind power which works from behind and over which the human activities have no control. *Daiva,* being viewed as power of unseen God or Divine (*Vidhatrvihitam*), is regarded to be such force about which it is not possible for the individual to transgress in any way.

Obviously, viewed from this angle, *Daiva* becomes opposed to *Puruṣakāra.* Because *Puruṣakāra* refers to individual's own effort. Instead of putting the blame on any unseen fate or destiny, the individual has confidence over his own karma. Thus "As you sow so you reap" becomes agreeable to the framework of *Puruṣakāra.* While freedom is assured in the scheme of *Puruṣakāra,* determinism is the outcome of believing in Daiva. The radical difference between the two has been expressed in various classical writings. For instance, in *Hitopadesa* it is stated that *Daiva* and *Atmasakti* or *Puruṣakāra* are different.[3] So also in *Benisamharam* it is said that to be born to a particular family is due to fate whereas to accomplish action is purely dependent on the individual himself.[4] As a matter of fact in various well known modern accounts of the doctrine of karma it has been emphasised that *karmavada* is based on the free will of the individual (*puruṣa*) and in that sense it is independent of fatalism (*Daiva*). It is held in this context that if the individual wants to better his lot, he can do so by performing the requisite karmas so that his future state either in this life or in the next becomes better. To put in other words, it is not the *Daiva* but his *Puruṣakāra* that determines his state of existence.

But, as already stated, those who do not want to interpret both *Daiva* and *Puruṣakāra* as not opposed but as complementary to each other cannot obviously accept the aforementioned account of *Daiva* as blind unseen fate on which the human effort has no control. They have understood

Daiva as the force of the unseen karma done by the individual in the previous life.[5] It is said that karmas accumulated through ages are *samcita* and out of such karmas the type of karmas which are supposed to be the cause of the present life are regarded as *prarabdha*. That means, *prarabdha* karma refers to such karma of the previous life which is to be fructified in the present life whenever there is appropriate situation and that cannot be avoided by the individual's present effort. That is why such karma is regarded as *Niyati*. *Puruṣakāra*, is, however, supposed to have effect upon the present living state only in so far as the other type of *samcita karma* (accomplished in the present life) is taken into account. Such karmas are called as *kriyamana karmas*. *Bhagavat Gita* holds that the fire of knowledge burns all karmas.[6] And it is maintained that knowledge can put an end to the effects of all such *kriyamana karmas* but not the *prarabdha karmas*. The effect of such karmas have to be borne by the individual and the effect of the present action of the individual (*Puruṣakāra*) has no effect on them.

But it is here the question arises as to how this account of *Daiva* or *Niyati* helps one to come to the conclusion that both *Puruṣakāra* and *Daiva* are not opposed to each other. True, *Daiva* in this version does not mean the blind force of any unseen power (be it God or any such agency). It is the work of the individual himself accomplished in the previous life of which at present there is no recall in the individual's conscious mind. It is said that the forces of such karmas are stored in the subconscious and those would be revived at the time of maturation (*vipaka*).[7] But if such *prarabdha karmas* function as *Niyati* over which the present individual's effort does not have at all any bearing then does it not amount to saying that in some distinct sense the individual at least in present state of existence becomes a puppet to such unseen karmas? It does not matter whether one calls such forces as due to *Daiva* or *Adṛsta* karma. Because whatever name one attaches to that, the effect on the individual remains almost same and the individual has no control over such forces.

Moreover it does not at all become clear to hold that the forces of previous unseen karmas are stored in the subconscious

state of mind. Subconscious, unconscious and conscious—all are meaningfully operated only within the present embodied situation and never beyond that. If something which did happen to an individual is not now remembered by the concerned individual, it is said by the psychiatrist (perhaps justifiably) that under suitable circumstances the individual can recall his past (which is within the present life and not obviously beyond that). But to extend the psychiatric researches which are meaningfully conducted in the empirical present embodied sphere to such transempirical level (disembodied existence of individual or the existence of individual in another body in separate space and time) is neither scientifically permissible nor rationally cogent.

Furthermore, it is also not clear as to what exactly is implied by previous unseen karma. It is held that the present state of existence is due to the forces of such unseen karma of past life. But then it may reasonably be asked as to what is that due to which the being of past life takes place? It it due to the force of unseen karma of another remote past life? But this again leads to infinite regress and does not become convincing.

So from all these observations, it becomes fairly clear that this changed version of *Daiva* or *Niyati* and *Adṛsta karma* does not bring the conclusion that it is not opposed to the concept of *Puruṣakāra*. If *Puruṣakāra* means some sort of freedom on the part of the individual concerned then one is to agree to the view that such freedom is definitely lost whether one relates it either to unseen fate or to unseen karma of the past life. In both the cases the deterministic bearing cannot be avoided. Perhaps the doctrine of karma, as long as, is understood in terms of past life and reincarnation (which is undoubtedly its popular version), the difficulty of freeing it from fatalistic note still persists. The concept of karma stands for human freedom and in that sense it has definite moral bearing; its autonomy seems to have been clearly lost when one links it with some sort of determinism and fatalism (whether it is of blind fate or of *Adṛsta karma*). *Daiva* and *Puruṣakāra*, in their own connotation, are no doubt, very much different and any attempt to reconcile the two becomes

only confusing. In what sense *Puruṣakāra* is to be taken both as ensuring human freedom and yet does not succumb to the belief in trans-empirical disembodied existence is however, beyond the scope of the present discussion.[8]

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CHAPTER SEVEN

A STUDY IN THE SĀṀKHYA CONCEPT OF ŚRUTI PRAMĀṆA

The Sāṁkhya philosophy accepts *śruti* as a valid source of knowledge in addition to *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*. *Śruti pramāṇa* is also known as *śabda* or *āgama pramāṇa*. Contemporary writers on Indian philosophy mostly take it for granted that the Sāṁkhya philosophy, by accepting this *śruti pramāṇa*, admits the authority of the Vedas.[1] It is again held that the Sāṁkhya philosopher, by accepting the authority of the Vedas, tries to show that the testimony of the Vedas is quite in harmony with its rationally established theories.[2] Gouḍapāda, the well-known commentator on *Sāṁkhya Kārikā*, also maintains that *śruti* is Veda and as such the knowledge obtained through *śruti* is valid.

So far as the Sāṁkhya philosophy is concerned, this account of *śruti pramāṇa* is almost remained unchallenged. But it seems to me that such an account of *śruti pramāṇa*, even if is found to have been so deeply established, is not unquestionable. This traditional account needs re-examination. In what follows, I shall try to show certain difficulties in this account of *śruti pramāṇa* and then I shall also interpret this *pramāṇa* from a fresh point of view, which, it seems to me, is quite in tune with the basic tenets of the Sāṁkhya philosophy.

One thing remains obvious that the Sāṁkhyaits, unlike the Mīmāṁsakas and the Vedāntins, do not at all depend upon the Vedas so far as their philosophy is concerned. In fact, no Sāṁkhyait writes any commentary either on *Karma*

Kāñda or on *Jñāna Kāñda* to show that the Sāṁkhya philosophy propounds the philosophy of the Vedas or the Upanishads. Nor even, the Sāṁkhya philosopher is ever interested to show that the doctrine which he advances is justified because it is supported by the Vedas. Rather on the contrary, the Sāṁkhyaits try to establish their doctrines on independent reasonings. Reason (*yukti*) never occupies subordinate place to that of *śruti*. In this connection, the verse quoted by Aniruddha in his *Vṛtti* "Big giants do not drop from heaven only because an *āpta* or authority says so. Only sayings which are supported by reason should be accepted by me and others like yourselves" is remarkable.[3]

In view of this general philosophical position of the Sāṁkhya system, it would appear rather difficult to accommodate *śruti* as a *pramāṇa* if *śruti* only means Veda. The rationalistic programme of the system seems to have a direct clash with this dogmatic interpretation. In order to avoid such a difficulty some have argued that *śruti* or *śabda pramāṇa* is advanced in the sāṁkhya philosophy not regarding the empirical objects but about the transcendental objects which are not known through either perception or inference.[4] But this defence seems to be completely baseless because in Sāṁkhya for the establishment of transcendental entities like *Puruṣa* or *Prakṛti* no scriptural or Vedic support has been, as a matter of fact, advanced. Independent arguments are given for the existence of both *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. These arguments may ultimately be found as defective.[5] But that is altogether a different matter. So to say that the Vedas are acceptable as trustworthy or authoritative regarding transcendental objects do not seem to be correct as far as the philosophy of Sāṁkhya is concerned.

Besides this, the interpretation that *śruti* is Veda is not found to be supported so far as the original writings of *Sāṁkhya Kārikā* are taken into consideration. Īśvarakṛṣṇa has only used the term *śruti* and that by this term he definitely does not mean Veda becomes clear from his own statement in *Kārikā*-2 where he holds that like the available ordinary means, *Anuśrava* or Veda is also inadequate for eradicating the three-fold sufferings because Veda is involved with impurity,

decay and inequality.[5] This statement of Īśvarakṛṣṇa shows that the Sāṁkhya system bases its conclusion on independent grounds and does not depend on the authority of the Vedas. Veda, it is believed, advances two courses for the eradication of sufferings, namely, the course of action (*karma*) in the sense of performing rituals and duties and the course of pure knowledge (*jñāna*) in the sense of knowing Brahman. By condemning Veda as a whole, Īśvarakṛṣṇa clearly repudiates *karma kāñda* as well as *jñāna kāñda*. Though the Sāṁkhya philosophy, as exposed by him, also aims at pure discriminative knowledge (*viveka jñāna*), yet it should be marked in this connection that such *viveka jñāna* is claimed to be possible through certain independent rational courses and not through the means already provided by the Vedas. All this shows that the Sāṁkhya philosophy, as presented by Īśvarakṛṣṇa, is fully independent of the Vedas and thus any attempt to implicate *Sāṁkhya Kārikā* with the Vedic orthodoxy seems to be definitely misleading.

Gouḍapāda interprets *āpta* as preceptors like Brahma and others and *śruti* as connoting Veda.[7] But this interpretation is already challenged and it is said that the term *āpta-śruti*, used in *Kārikā*, signifies the utterance of a reliable person.[8] And here in *Kārikā* there is no suggestion that *āpta-śruti* necessarily refers Veda. Vācaspati, of course, does not categorically state *śruti* as Veda. But while commenting on *Kārikā*-2, he suggests that though the generic term '*anuśravika*' is used in *Kārikā* yet it should only refer to the ritualistic section of the Vedas and not to the section conveying pure knowledge. Such a suggestion seems to be not implied so far as the text of the *Kārikā* is concerned.[9] As it has already been pointed out, Īśvarakṛṣṇa's condemnation of Veda is not qualified but unqualified. His writings clearly indicate that for the Sāṁkhyaite neither the available ordinary means nor the course provided by the Vedas are acceptable. Only the right discriminative knowledge of the Manifest, the Unmanifest and the Knower (*Vyakta Avyakta Jña vijñānāt*) is approved. It is, however, true that the Vedas are *śruti* in the sense those are simply heard from the ancient saints and enlightened persons; but this need not imply that whatever is heard and is subsequently

found to be true must be Vedic utterances. Though all Vedic utterances are *śrutis*, all *śrutis* are not necessarily Vedic utterances. This interpretation rather seems to be an instance of wrong conversion. Besides this, the view that *śruti* is just identical with Veda in the context of classical Indian philosophies seems to be questionable when one finds the Jaina philosophy which, though does not at all accept the authority of the Vedas, yet accept *śruti* as a valid source of knowledge. According to this system "Śruta, the second kind of ordinary knowledge is mostly interpreted as knowledge obtained from what is heard from others."[10] Morever, in Sāṁkhya philosophy there is ample scope for interpreting *śruti* as a *pramāṇa* in a different manner.

Īśvarakṛṣṇa (in *Kārikā*-5) takes *śruti* as *āpta-vacana*. Vācaspati, while exaplaining this statement of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, gives an illustration. He writes that when some experienced individual directs another individual by uttering a sentence (such as "Bring the cow") and this individual works accordingly (i.e., brings the cow), then the third person, watching all this, comes to the conclusion that such directive sentence like "Bring the cow" actually signifies the corresponding meaning, namely, bringing the cow. By this the third person acquires the knowledge that such word or sentence has such idea or meaning. This knowledge of proper meaning of a sentence (*vākyārtha-jñānam*) is neither possible through perception nor through inference but is due to an independent source known as *śruti pramāṇa*. Vācaspati defines *śruti* as the comprehension of the meaning of a sentence which is possible by that sentence (*śrutiḥ vākyajantiam vākyārthajñānam*). This clearly suggests that *śruti pramāṇa* is not actually needed for the knowledge of certain transcendental entities which are not known either through perception or through inference but only through the full comprehension of the Vedic assertion. As a matter of fact the knowledge of the Vedic assertions is not at all implied so far as the definition of *śruti* is formulated in terms of comprehending the meaning of sentence. As the illustration shows and the definition indicates, it must be accepted that *śruti*, according to Sāṁkhya, only stands for *vākyārthajñāna* and *āpta-vacana* means that valid assertion or true statement which

expresses the meaning of a sentence correctly. It does not matter whether the *vakya* is *laukika* or *Vaidika.* No necessary implication can be made here that this definition of Vācaspati only refers to the knowledge of the Vedic statements. Both *Vaidika* as well as *laukika* statements are acceptable in so far as they express the correct meanings of different expressions. Hence the view of Chatterjee and Datta that *laukika sabda* is not recognised by Sāṁkhya as a separate *pramāṇa* does not seem to be justified.[11]

Vācaspati's commentary establishes the important point that by *śruti pramāṇa* there is the full knowledge of word and its meaning (*śabdārtha*). *Śruti*, in this light, becomes the study of language. It is the means or the method by which one becomes fully clear regarding the uses of language. It is the study of meaning in its various forms that is of sole interest to the Sāṁkhya philosopher while he discusses *śruti pramāṇa.* Here, it seems, he plans to discuss only the issues of syntax and meaning. The different logical conditions of meaning like *ākāṁkṣyā*, etc. and the meaningful employment of words in the context of significant utterances are the relevant issues that come under *śruti pramāṇa.* In this sense, it can be said that *śruti* is the method by which valid knowledge regarding sentences and their meanings are well-determined. This is possible by means of analytical and critical study of the nature of discourse and that is why this *pramāṇa* is also named as *śabda pramāṇa.*[12] However, one should concede that any detailed discussion regarding such logical conditions of meaning is not referred by Vācaspati in his commentary. In order to obtain valid knowledge regarding meanings of various significant utterances, adequate logical and analytical study of language has not been carried on in different classical Sāṁkhya treatises. But this need not necessarily suggest that for the rationalistic philosophy like Sāṁkhya, *śruti pramāṇa* stands for the acceptance of the authority of the Vedas, and it can in no way be interpreted as the study of language.

It is interesting to note that Vācaspati who takes *śruti* as *vākyārthajñāna*, also in the subsequent lines writes that this *āpta-vacana* is self-valid for it is brought about by the words of

the Veda which being independent of human authorship, is free from all defects (passage-41). This subsequent statement apparently suggests that for Sāṁkhya, the Vedic utterances being impersonal are self-valid and as such their authority can never be challenged. But, all the same, it is to be marked that the Sāṁkhya philosophy which is fundamentally so much prone to reason can never consistently accept something as valid without applying the canons of reason. There does not seem to be any compromise between rationalism and dogmatism. If *śruti* is the comprehension of meaning of any sentence, then to say that the *śruti vākyas* are *yukta* just because they are derived from the Vedas does not appear to be reasonable. One should rather say that scriptural statements are true not because these statements are scriptural but because what these statements mean are also found to be rationally compatible. Here for the validity of scriptural or Vedic statements it is suggested from the Sāṁkhya point of view that "the scriptural statements are tested and lived by the *muktas* or the liberated, who pass them on to others."[13] But what is the guarantee that what these so called *muktas* profess are really the true ones ? It is found that different *muktas* supply different accounts about their revealed experiences. In view of such divergencies, it becomes obviously a problem to accept one account and reject the other.

It is said in reply that "the Sāṁkhya is aware that there are other systems which profess to be revealed, and so argues that reason will have to be employed in finding out which codes of revelation are true and which are not."[14] But this again clearly brings out the important point that the Sāṁkhya finally rests not on dogmatic revelation but on the tracts of *reason* for arriving at philosophical conclusion. The scriptural statements are to be accepted only when the knowledge derived from those statements actually confirm to reason. A statement is to be accepted as true not simply because it is stated by an authority but because it agrees with the relevant course of reason. The term '*āpta*' is to be construed not on the basis of blind dogmatic authoritarianism but on actual competency of communicating certain ideas which are appropriately reasonable. In other words, *āptatva* lies not on the grounds

of authority but on the basis of sound logic and reason. Vācaspati, therefore, maintains in the subsequent lines of his commentary that *śruti vākyas* must be reasonable assertions and must be free from all internal contradictions; they must not be opposed to the accepted canons of logic and must be supported by sound proofs.[15]

In view of all these it cannot be held that the Sāṁkhya philosopher accepts *śruti* as a *pramāṇa* in the sense of just accepting the authority of the Vedas. Any assertion, whether Vedic or non-Vedic, must confirm to *yuktiḥ* (reason) in some form or other prior to its being accepted at least in the philosophical plane. The general belief, that the Vedas are *apauruṣeya* and therefore are valid, is though tenable from the general religious or theological perspective yet so far as critical reflection in the philosophical sense is concerned, such beliefs obviously require further examination. It seems that a traditional Sāṁkhya philosopher, as a man brought under a particular cultural tradition may subscribe to the general Hindu view of life and in that sense may accept certain beliefs as a matter of religious conviction. But as a philosopher, he always insists to remain within the accepted fold of reason and is unprepared to accept anything dogmatically.

It is, however, true that in many cases the religious orthodoxy and the philosophical rationality are not well distinguished. As a result certain religious convictions are mistakenly cited as matters of proof in philosophical circles. But for the proper understanding of both religion and philosophy it seems to be always better to clearly analyse and discriminate the issues raised in both the circles. It seems that the classical Sāṁkhya philosopher accepts the validity of the Vedas most probably because of the general religious and theological conviction but in matters of close philosophical reflection, he is definitely putting himself in an independent footing of reason free from any kind of religious orthodoxy.

That *śruti* does not mean Veda and *śruti pramāṇa* does not signify the acceptance of Vedic authority becomes further clear in Vācaspati's subsequent remarks. While rejecting rumour (*aitihya*) as a valid means of knowledge, he argues that rumour is only a continuity of vague assertion whose

original source is not traced. It is usually in the form : "Old people say that there is a ghost living on this banyan tree." This assertion cannot be accepted as valid and is always open to doubt because its original source is ever undetermined. In other words, simply because some assertions are claimed to have been maintained since long from generation to generation, it cannot be accepted as matters of knowledge. Something in order to be knowledge must be properly evidenced. If something is claimed to be the case, its claimant is known and is known to be reasonable in the manner of asserting that which is prone to logical scrutiny, then only it is accepted as valid in the sense of a simple *śruti vakya.* To put it differently, the Vedic assertions can be accepted as valid or conveying knowledge only when they are found to be reasonable, otherwise there would be little to distinguish between *aitihya* and *śruti.* *Śruti pramāṇa* is not only designed to prove the Vedic assertion as valid but rather aims at proving any assertion whether Vedic or non-Vedic as valid provided such assertion confirms to certain basic forms of reasoning.

From all these I am led to conclude that for the Sāṁkhya philosophy, *śruti pramāṇa* cannot signify the Vedic authority. It rather means that method through which valid knowledge regarding meanings of different assertions become possible.*

References

1. See, for example, S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy,* Vol. II, London : George Allen and Unwin, 1948 reprint, p. 302.
2. S. Chatterji and D. Datta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy,* Seventh Edition, Calcutta : University of Calcutta, 1968, p. 6.
3. *"na hy āptavacanan nabhaso nipatanti mahāsurāh yuktimad vacanam grāhyaṃ mayānyaisca bhavadvidhaiḥ"*—Anirudda *Vṛtti,* 1. 26.
4. S. Chatterjee and D. Datta, op. cit., p. 279.
5. For a critical examination of these arguments see my articles "Sāṁkhya arguments for Prakṛi" *Bharati*—Utkal University Journal—Humanities, Vol. I, 1967 and "An examination of the Sāṁkhya arguments for Puruṣa" *Indian Philosophical Quarterly* (Poona University), Vol. II, No. 3, April 1975. Both the articles are also published in this volume.

6. "*drṣtavadanuśraviḱaḥ sa hy aviśudhikṣayatiśayayuktah.*"
7. "*āptaacarya brahmādayah śrutir Vedaḥ*"—Gouḍapāda *Bhasya.*
8. See Jwala Prasad, *History of Indian Epistemology*, Delhi : Munshiram Manoharlal, 1956, p. 294.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 279.
10. *Vide* : *Tattvārthadhigama Sūtra*, I. 20 (Quoted by S. Chatterjee and D. Datta, op. cit., p. 78).
11. *Ibid.*, p. 279.
12. It may be mentioned here that *sabda pramāṇa* has already been interpreted by professor G. Misra as the study of language in respect of Saṃkara Vedanta. *Vide* : His Srimanta Pratap Seth Lecture on Vedanta "The Logical Foundations of Saṃkara Vedanta" delivered at the 43rd session of the Indian Philosophical Congress, held at Dharwar, 1969. This lecture is again reprinted in his book, *Analytical Studies in Indian Philosophical Problems*, Bhubaneswar : University of Utkal, 1971.
13. S. Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 301.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ayuktatvam ca etesām viganāt viccinnamūlatvāt pramāṇa viruddhārtha abhidhānasca* (*Tattvakaumudī*—paragraph-43).

*Originally published in a monograph entitled : *Analytical Studies in the Sāṁkhya Philosophy*, Bhubaneswar, 1977.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SATKĀRYAVĀDA AND ASATKĀRYAVĀDA

Among the Indian theories of causation, Satkāryavāda and Asatkāryavāda can be regarded as the two principal doctrines by reference to which other Indian theories of causation may be easily formulated. The Satkāryavādins argue that the effect is already present in the material casue and so not basically new and different from the material cause. Since it is found that it is milk and not sand which gives rise to curd, the Satkāryavādins contend that curd is already there in milk in an unmanifested form although it becomes manifested only when it assumes a form which is different from that of milk. So the main point which the Satkāryavādins seem to have emphasised is the existence of the effect in the material cause even prior to its origination. The Asatkāryavādins, on the other hand, maintain that the effect, prior to its origination, is not there in the material cause. Since it is found that the purpose of curd is not served by milk, the Asatkāryavādins argue that curd is different from milk and that it is not there prior to its production. A number of arguments are advanced in support of both the Satkāryavādins and the Asatkāryavādins. The arguments for either position seem to be very interesting as well as plausible. Naturally, therefore, one is perplexed as to which view is acceptable. The purpose of this essay is neither to justify nor to refute either of these views, but to analyse them and show how both the views rest ultimately on different definitions of the term "effect".

Both the Satkāryavādins and the Asatkāryavādins agree so far as the actual facts are concerned. They agree that it is milk which gives rise to curd. Yet one says that the curd even

prior to its origination is there in the milk in a latent form and the other says that the curd is not there before its origination, it is a totally new product. Now we can neither prove nor disprove any one of these two views by simply observing and experimenting upon the facts. The facts remain the same, for both the views. Since factually neither view is seen to be either provable or disprovable, one may reject both as 'unverifiable nonsense'. If the meaning of a proposition is the method of its verification, then definitely the contentions of both the Satkāryavādins and the Asatkāryavādins will be meaningless. But why should meaning be defined in terms of verification ? This seems to be arbitrary. Definitely, the propositions, "The effect exists in the cause prior to its production" and "The effect does not exist prior to its production" are not so vague as to carry no sense at all. To call these propositions 'nonsense' would, thus, seem merely to avoid rather than solve the issue raised by them. While criticising the Logical Positivists Warnock says, "Thus metaphysics is indeed eliminated, rather than destroyed ; it is not exploded, but extruded ; it is simply cast out from the field of significant discourse."[1]

Let us then take some milk and some curd and analyse them chemically. If now we clearly note down each and every constituent that we find by analysing milk and similarly note the constituents which are yielded by the analysis of curd, we shall certainly discover some similarities as well as some differences. Some of the constituents which we may find in the milk may again appear in the curd, and some may disappear. Moreover, some other new constituents may appear in the curd which we do not find in the milk. But this result does not solve our problem, as we shall see. The contention of the Satkāryavādins is that the effect is there in the cause prior to its production. But the effect was not at that time. just as it appears now, i.e. as a fully visible effect. It is there, but in a latent or invisible form. In other words, it was then unmanifested. So the effect is not actually present in the material cause, but is only potentially present there. The so-called differences between milk and curd can be very easily explained by the Satkāryavādins as due to the difference between potentiality and actuality. In fact, according to them, the cause and the effect are not two distinct

substances, but merely two states of the same substance. At the casual state, the substance has manifested certain features, while certain other features of it remain unmanifested ; and the moment it is transformed into the effect some features which were already manifested become unmanifested, and some that were unmanifested become manifested. But the Asatkāryavādins argue that the very meaning of the phrase 'potentiality of the effect' is ambiguous. Nobody disputes the fact that curd comes out of milk. We can say that it is milk which produces curd and yet at the same time maintain that curd is not basically the same as milk, but something new and different. Curd is not present in milk prior to the origination of curd. At least the differences between curd and milk revealed by their chemical analysis, indicate that curd is surely a different and new thing. Thus while the Satkāryavādins say that the new elements that we find in curd are also there, in a potential form, in milk, the Asatkāryavādins say that the notion of potential existence does not explain the novelty of the effect. For since potential existence is different from actual existence, the actual effect cannot be present in the cause before it is actually produced out of the cause.

The upshot of these arguments and counter-arguments is as follows. The Satkāryavādins lay more stress on the similarities between the cause and the effect and thereby explain away the new ingredients by saying that they are present in a potential form in the cause; on the other hand, the Asatkāryavādins give greater importance to the new ingredients and thereby conclude that the effect, since it contains some new ingredients, is not, as such, there in the cause. That means that the two theories employ the term 'effect' in the different ways. According to the Satkāryavādins, the effect is to be considered not only as what comes out of the cause, but also as what remains in the cause in a potential form, prior to its production. On the other hand, the Asatkāryavādins say that the term 'effect' is to be considered as what not only comes out of the cause, but as what is new and different from the cause. New chemical analysis does not provide us any 'crucial' instances by which we could prove either the existence or the non-existence of the effect in its material cause,

(Here the word 'effect' is to be understood in its normal sense, without reference to either the Satkārya or the Asatkārya view.) The Satkāryavādins say that though the effect is not seen in the cause still that does not means that it is not there ; we should rather say that it is there in an unmanifested form. This line of thinking is also supported by the arguments : "What is not seen is not for that reason necessarily non-existent."[2] The effect becomes manifested only when it is actualised and becomes visiby distinct from the material cause. The Asatkāyavādins say that though the effect is produced out of the cause and not from anything else, still the effect, as effect, is not there in the cause, since it is not seen to be present there. This line of thinking is also supported by the reverse argument : What is not seen is not existent; at any rate, it is as good as non-existent. As already stated, neither view is either provable or disprovable. It is possible to hold either view by employing the term 'effect' in a particular way. The Satkāryavādins define 'effect' in such a way that the definition permits us to say that the effect potentially exists in the material cause, even prior to its production. Similarly the Asatkārya-vādins define 'effect' in such a way that the definition does not permit us to do so.

It would appear, therefore, that both Satkāryavāda and Asatkāryavāda rest upon peculiar ways of defining the term, 'effect'. If the effect is defined in a particular way, then alone, Satkāryavāda can be maintained. The same is the case with Asatkāryavāda. There is here, no dispute about what the fact is. So it is not possible to decide the issue by observation and experiment. Each view is ultimately based on an arbitrary definition of the word, 'effect', a definition which is of the nature of a recommendation. As such, the definitions are neither true nor false; hence none of these views can be regarded as either true or false. Each of them is just aimed at interpreting the phenomena presented in a peculiar way. The Satkāryavādins suggest that since in the cause as well as in the effect there is, in certain respects, no difference in form, shape, weight, position etc. therefore, it is better to regard them as one. The Asatkāryavādins suggest

that since curd cannot satisfy the purpose of milk, so it is proper enough to take them as two. From this, it is evident that both are arguing for, 'what should be the proper way of describing the case' and not for 'what is the case'. Since it is a case of 'should' or 'ought' we say this to be a mere 'recommendation'. We are free to accept one and reject the other without thereby committing a mistake.*

References

1. Warnock in "Criticisms of Metaphysics" in *The Nature of Metaphysics*, Edited by D.F. Pears, p. 128.
2. Cf. Vācaspati's remark while commenting on the *Sānkhya-Karika* : "न प्रत्यक्षनिवृतिमात्राद्वस्त्वभावो भवति:" : "The non-existence of a certain object cannot be inferred merely from the fact of its not being perceived." (Trans. by G.N. Jha).

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CHAPTER NINE

SĀṀKHYA ARGUMENTS FOR PRAKṚTI

In this essay, I shall confine myself to an examination of the different arguments which are aimed at proving the existence of *Prakṛti*. The arguments are seen in *Iśvara-Kṛṣṇa's Sāṁkhya Kārikā* (XV). *Vācaspati Miśra* elucidates and defends these arguments in his commentary, "The *Tattva-Kaumudi*". The arguments are as follows :

> "*Bhedānāṁ parimāṇāt, Samanvayāt,*
> *Śaktitaḥ pravṛtteśca,*
> *Kāraṇa-kārya-vibhāgād*
> *avibhāgād-vaiśvarūpyasya*"

The translation[1] of the above passage is stated as follows : "Because of the finite nature of specific objects, because of homogencity, because of evolution being due to the efficiency of the cause, because of separation between cause and its product, and because of the merging of the whole world (of effects)".

Before we examine these arguments one after the other, let us make some preliminary clarification. Before these arguments are advanced, *Iśvarakṛṣṇa* has already made clear in his *Kārikā VIII*, that the non-perception of these (Nature and the rest) is due to its subtlety, not to its non-existence; since it is actually inferred through its effects.[2] This implies that since *Prakṛti* is accepted as something unmanifest (*avyakta*) it is naturally non-empirical. The knowledge of it is to be attained through inferential process. From the perception of effect (*Kārya*) we can infer the cause (*Kāraṇa*).[3] The world-order is taken . . . . as effect and as effect it is to be related with its

cause (Prakṛti) where it (effect) lies in its unmanifested form. That means these arguments for *Prakṛti* depend upon the acceptance of *Satkārya* view of causality. In fact, *Vācaspati* also, mentions this clearly in his commentary saying that in order to establish the existence of *Prakṛti*, first the effect is to be 'existent' even before its causal operation.[4] So if one can find any logical inadequacy in the *Satkārya* view of causality then doubtlessly the arguments for the existence of *Prakṛti* is undermined to a considerable extent. In this connection we may point out that we have already made an attempt[5] elsewhere to show that the aim of *Satkāryavāda* arguments is to emphasise more on the similarity between the cause and the effect and thereby to explain away the newness of the effect by saying that it is present in a potential form in the cause. According to this theory the term, 'effect' is to be considered not only as what is produced by the cause, but also as what remains in the cause in a potential form, prior to its production and also subsequent dissolutions. From this it appears that the *Satkāryavādins* define 'effect' in such a way that the definition permits us to say that the effect potentially exists in the material cause, even prior to its production. As such, the definition is neither true nor false. It is no better than a mere verbal recommendation. One is free to accept this or to reject this. At least there is no logical binding imposed upon us to accept this.

Now leaving our analysis on *Satkārya* view at this level let us examine each of the arguments advanced for the existence of *Prakṛti*. For let us hope, the existence of *Prakṛti* might be logically proved from some other ground. In this connection we may note that *Vācaspati* while commenting on *Kārikā* has changed the order of arguments that are there in *Kārikā*. He has put the first argument to the third, second to the fourth, third to the second and fourth to the first. Probably, this is because he anticipates one objection from the side of the opponent after he expounds the fourth and the third one. *Vācaspati* thinks that a reply can be given to that possible objection of the opponent from the arguments of the first and the second one. Here, for the sake of convenience, we examine the four arguments in the same order in which *Vācaspati* has given them.

This argument (*Kāraṇakārya-vibhāgād avibhāgād vaiśvarūpyasya*) roughly tells that the separation and the non-separation of cause and effect can prove the existence of *Prakṛti.* The *Sāṁkhyites* here, point out that the already existing limbs of the Tortoise emerging out of its body, become distinguished from it. We say that this is the body of the Tortoise and these are its limbs and on again entering the body, the limbs become unmanifest and hidden. Similarly though the effect becomes distinguished from the cause, and again is re-united with the cause, yet that is the cause which alone is the ground of all such distinction and non-distinction. So cause must exist.

But the point is whether *Prakṛti* as the unmanifest cause of the world-effect is proved. The *Sāṁkhyites* say, as in the case of the above example, body is said to be the abode of limbs so also an unmanifest *Prakṛti* must be speculated as the abode of the world-effect. The world-effect is both distinguished and non-distinguished from *Prakṛti* at the time of evolution and dissolution respectively. It may appear at the very outset that this analogical argument does not hold good simply because one does not normally take the limbs of Tortoise as the effect, and the body of it as the cause. Granting that the analogical argument should not be stretched too far, one may still question the justification of *Prakṛti* to be the cause of the world-effect.[6] From the *Sāṁkhya* point of view it may however be said that the world, in order to be intelligibly explained, may require a material cause and that thing may be named as unmanifest *Prakṛti.* But as it seems to us, this necessity of explaining the world by some other principle is originally due to the acceptance of one point that the world is an effect, and because the effect cannot remain without cause, so the world cannot remain in itself alone. Cause and effect are relative concepts. It is true; if we apply one of these concepts we are forced to conceive of the other. But from this, does it follow that the world is definitely an effect and the unmanifest *Prakṛti* must be its cause ? Even if the world is admitted to be the effect, *Prakṛti* as its cause is not strictly intelligible.

Moreover to say that the unmanifest *Prakṛti* is the cause of the manifested world-order, does not seem to be much

enlightening. Because to say that manifested curd is caused by unmanifested curd which lies in the milk, is just to presuppose that curd is essentially in milk and nothing more. It seems as if the *Sāṁkhyites* here overemphasise the material content and completely neglect the roles of other factors (like agency, environment etc.) perhaps due to their psychological addiction to material cause.

The second argument '*śaktitaḥ pravṛtteśca*' does not add anything of much significance. It states, because the evolution of the effect must be due to the effciency of the cause, therefore the world-effect must logically assume some cause which must be efficient for producing it. The cause having the potentiality to give rise the effect causes the evolution. The milk is changed into the curd because the former has the potentiality to transform itself into curd and the curd, in an unmanifested state, is assumed to be in the milk and is essentially the same as the cause. *Vācaspati* says that the latent efficiency in the cause is no other than the existence therein of the effect in an unmanifested state.[7] The whole world, being the product of evolution must logically assume the potent cause i.e., unmanifest *Prakṛti* which retains both the capacity of evolving and *involving* the world-effect.

It seems that the second argument only makes another assumption that the world-effect is a *product of evolution* and therefore must logically assume the unmanifest cause as the cause of such evolution. But the point is why at all does one conclude that the world is there due to evolution ? Can't we suppose that the world is an emergent and therefore it does not presuppose the existence of any immanent cause such as the *Sāṁkhya Prakṛti* ? The effect may be very different from the cause as we find in case of Hydrogen and Oxygen giving rise to water.

Moreover the concepts like cause and effect are meaningfully employed in our language in particular and specific contexts. For instance, it is sensible when I say that illness is the cause of my weakness. But if I go on asking what is that which explains everything for every time to come, or what is the first and the ultimate cause of this whole world, then probably I am formulating a question which is not

intelligible or meaningful. If such questions are admitted, then the problem is artificially and arbitrarily created which does not admit of any clear and conclusive solution.[8] Even if the *Sāṁkhyites*' version of taking the world as an evolved product be granted, still then it does not necessarily follow that *Prakṛti* alone must be the cause of such evolution or that *Prakṛti* is an existent fact. At least, so far no argument is given from the side of the *Sāṁkhya* which can conclusively prove the existence of *Prakṛti* to be the sufficient ground of the world-effect.

Vācaspati, here, anticipates a possible objection.[9] Some may object saying that even if the two previous arguments are valid, it does not necessarily follow that unmanifest *Prakṛti* would be the cause of the world-order. *Mahat* may also be conceived as the cause. All the specific object arise from *Mahat* and are dissolved in *Mahat*. So an unmanifest *Prakṛti* need not be assumed as the ultimate cause.

The third argument, according to *Vācaspati*, contains a reply to such possible objection. *Mahat* cannot be the cause of the world since it is finite and limited. That cause which is finite cannot be the final cause it may again be logically speculated to have been deduced from another cause. Manifest cannot ultimately be the cause of itself because such a supposition may lead to *infinite regress*. So an unmanifest *Parkṛti* alone has to be postulated as the ultimate cause of the world-order.

But this argument that finite is necessarily caused by something infinite is, as it seems to us, no statement about matter of fact since so far as experience goes, a finite has another finite for its cause and there is no empirical evidence in support of any infinite as the cause of any finite entity. The *Sāṁkhyites* may avoid this point saying, why should empirical evidence be taken as sacrosanct ? It is logically necessary to postulate an infinite to be the cause of finite. Unmanifest *Prakṛti* is claimed to be there not because it satisfies the empirical evidence, but because it is absolutely a logical necessity. Now, it can be pointed out that this necessity which the *Sāṁkhyites* raise here, is no more than a formal necessity. The only point, perhaps, is that if we imagine a

finite something to be the cause, then at once a question may be asked, what is next ? But if we cutdown this possibility of questioning from the very beginning just by *defining* our cause in such a way (defining the cause as something contradictory to that of effect) that cause is infinite in contrast to finite effect, then everything is satisfied.[10] But this, it seems to us, is just more avoidance of further questions but really not proving something infinite as existing. *Prakṛti* may be defined as infinite, but that does not make it existent. Finite effect may lead to infinite cause from the point of one established linguistic structure, but from this why should it follow that the world is evolved out of infinite *Prakṛti* ?

The last argument, '*Samanvayāt*' does not seem to have any strength. It says that the great principle and the rest are found to be homogeneous in the sense that they consist in pleasure, pain and delusion. And that which is the cause of the great principle and the rest, should be constituted of those elements which are the common elements found in different evolutes.[11] *Prakṛti* is said to be constituted of three *guṇas* viz., pleasure, pain and delusion. So it is legitimate to say that *Prakṛti* is the cause of *Mahat* etc.

But the point is, because we, here, accept a particular definition of cause, we are bound to admit *Prakṛti* alone to be the cause and not anything else. Here, cause is implicitly defined as that which is constituted of those elements which are found to be common among the different effects. Now, *Prakṛti* is defined already to be constituted of three *guṇas* i.e. pleasure, pain and delusion. And the different effects (*Mahat* etc.) are said to have these three *guṇas* as the common features or properties. So it is suggested that it is *Prakṛti* and nothing else which can properly be the cause. The argument, here, carries least material implication. It is circular and does not prove anything as existent. It only suggests that one supposition begs another.

Besides, one may be critical towards this argument from another angle. The *Sāṁkhyites* contend that pleasure, pain etc. lie in different objects of world-effects. That is because they are victim to certain illusions of language. We do

distinguish between two expressions such as 'He gave me money, and 'It gave me pleasure'. In the first case, it is sensible to say that he has some amount of money and he gave it to me. That means his giving money to me implies that he had money with him. Whereas 'It gave me pleasure' does not likewise mean that it had pleasantness with it. Rather 'It gave me pleasure' means I got pleasure from it, and to others it might be painful. Since in both the cases we use 'gave', the philosopher is misled to argue that the meaning in both the cases must be understood in the same way i.e. 'giving pleasure' is analogous to 'giving money'. The man who gives money must have possessed money prior to giving it. Similarly the object which gives pleasure must have possessed pleasure in some way however mystical it may be.

So at last, it seems to us that the *Sāṁkhya* argument are logically powerless to establish the existence of *Prakṛti* as the sole cause of the world-order. Throughout the series of the arguments there is an explicit confusion between the formal level and the material level. From a peculiar concept of the world-order, the argument proceeds to postulate a type of cause, the notion of which is formally implied in the previous conception of the world-order. So from one arbitrary formulation of the world-view, we pass on to a conception which is logically implied in the former. This does not prove any fact. It only shows inter-relation among arbitrary concepts or ideas.*

References

1. The translation is made by Prof. G.N. Jha.
2. "*Sauksmyāt tadanupalabdhis na bhavāt Kāryatas-tadupalabdhed*". Though in both the cases the word, *upalabdheh* is used we are to take in the first case as perception and the second as inference under natural implication.
3. It is a kind of *Śesavat anumāna* according to the *Nyāya* formulation.
4. The *Tattvakaumudi* : Para-62.

5. For a detailed logical analysis, see my article, 'Satkāryavāda and Asatkāryavāda,' published in the Journal of the Philosophical Association, Vol. IX, No. 35-36, July-October, 1962. It has been also included in the present volume.
6. In fact *Vedantins* do not subscribe to this materialistic causal interpretation of the *Sāmkhyites* and advocate for a rival spiritualistic hypothesis.
7. *The Tattvakaumudi*, para-113. Here no further logical reason is stated as to why the theory decides in favour of the immanent causation and not for the emergent causation.
8. A similar point with regard to any deductive metaphysical systems, is suggested by Prof. S. Hampshire in his article 'Metaphysical arguments' published in the book, 'The Nature of Metaphysics' Ed. by Pears, London, pp. 35-36.
9. The *Tattvakaumudi*, para. 114.
10. Here it may be noted that this way of interpreting the nature of cause and effect goes even counter to the general theory of Satkāryavāda of the Sāṁkhya philosophers that both cause and effect are essentially non-different and are merely two aspects of the same substance.
11. While commenting the previous *kārikā* (XIV) *Vācaspati* has already made the logical assumption that the existence of the Unmanifest is established on the ground of *the properties of the effect being of the same nature as those of the cause*. para. 110.

*Originally published in *Bharati*, Utkal University Journal, Humanities, Vol. 1, 1967.

CHAPTER TEN

AN EXAMINATION OF THE SĀṀKHYA ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF PURUṢA

The Sāṁkhya philosophy has advanced a number of arguments for the existence of *puruṣa.* These arguments are, no doubt, important in the context of the Sāṁkhya philosophy because by the help of these arguments the Sāṁkhya philosopher attempts to establish one of the basic metaphysical entities in his philosophy, namely, *Puruṣa* or the pure conscious subject. In what follows, I shall make an examination of these arguments. These arguments are presented in different forms by different Sāṁkhya writers. For the purpose of authentic presentation, I shall take up these arguments as advanced by Īśvarakṛṣṇa in his *Śāṁkhya kārikā.* However, these arguments of Īśvarakṛṣṇa will be also taken up along with the commentaries of both Gauḍapāda and Vācaspati Miśra. The arguments are as follows :

Saṁghātaparārthatvāt, triguṇādiviparyayādadhiṣṭhānāt I
Puruṣo'sti, bhoktṛbhāvāt, kaivalyārthaṁ Pravṛtteśca II

The translation[1] of the above passage is stated as follows : "Because all composite objects are for another's use, because there must be absence of the three attributes and other properties, because there must be control, because there must be some one to experience and because there is a tendency towards isolation or final beatitude, therefore, the Spirit must be there."

The Sāṁkhya, like other systems, aims at liberation or final release. It recommends a discriminative knowledge of the *Vyakta*, *Avyakta* and *Puruṣa* (*Kārikā*-2) which would put an end

to all sorts of sufferings and the cessation of all sufferings is itself the final beatitude (*Kārikā*-44).[2] *Vyakta* being evident does not require any further rational support. Arguments are already advanced for the existence of *Avyakta* (*Kārikā*-15). Now further reasons are adduced for the existence of *Puruṣa.* Despite its orthodoxy, Sāṁkhya does not defend its doctrine by an appeal to *śruti* but always attempts to explain the system by independent logical arguments.[3] This is, no doubt, a merit on the part of the system. But, as we shall see, all the arguments (at least in so far as the existence of *Puruṣa* is concerned) are faulty because of certain fundamental linguistic confusions.

This first argument (*Saṁghātaparārthatvāt*) suggests that all composite objects (*Saṁghātas*) are for another. Here the word 'another' (*para*) is to be understood in an absolute sense. That means, the *para* must be necessarily non-composite. Since *Prakṛti* is composite in character, it is meant for some non-composite being which is no other than *Puruṣa.* Both Gauḍapāda as well as Vācaspati, while commenting on this argument, talk about the analogy of bed and its user.[4] Gauḍapāda says that as the bed which is composed of the bedding, props, cords, a covering cloth of cotton and a pillow is meant to serve the purpose of another and not of its own, so also the composition of *Mahat* and the rest is for the sake of *Puruṣa.* But here one important objection is anticipated by Vācaspati (*Kaumudī*-121). The user of the bed is a composite psycho-physical organism and hence a non-composite *Puruṣa* need not be inferred from the composite character of *Mahat* and the rest. Vācaspati himself replies to this objection by pointing out that *regressus ad infinitum* (*anavasthā*) would result if something composite is inferred from another composite thing. Logically one is bound to admit from the composite object, the non-composite Spirit (*asaṁghāta Puruṣa*).[5]

The purpose of this argument is to prove the existence of *Puruṣa*. *Puruṣa* is argued to be independently existing apart from *Mahat*, etc. But the purpose of the argument fails when it merely states a formal truth, *viz.*, something composite cannot logically be meant for another composite but must ultimately be meant for something non-composite. *Regressus ad*

infinitum is a formal fallacy which does not warrant anything of material significance. Supposing that the composite things of the world are meant for another composite being then at once a question may legitimately be asked in the formal level about the basis of that composite being. But if one cuts down this possibility of questioning from the very beginning just by defining the user of composite things as a non-composite being then every thing goes alright. This is formally cogent since the twist in the language is done by verbal manipulation. But this, it seems to us, is mere avoidance of further questions and not really proving non-composite Spirit as existing. It appears that this argument is due to the confusion of material and formal levels.

The second argument (*Triguṇādiviparyayāt*) says that *Puruṣa* must exist because it is the reverse of that which has the three attributes and the rest. From the nature of the non-composite character of Spirit it necessarily follows, argued Vācaspati, that *Puruṣa* must be devoid of the three attributes and the rest (*Kaumudī*-121). In *Kārikā*-11 *Prakṛti* is said to be *triguṇam* (of three constituents), *avivekī* (non-distinguishable), *viṣaya* (objective), *sāmānya* (common), *acetanam* (non-intelligent) and *prasavadharmi* (productive). *Puruṣa* is explained as just the reverse of all these, *i.e.*, it is *nirguṇa* (devoid of three constituents), *vivekī* (distinguishable), *aviṣaya* (non-objective), *asāmānya* (uncommon), *cetanam* (intelligent) and *aprasavadharmi* (non-productive).

It is not clearly an independent argument. Following Vācaspati the best that one can attribute to this argument is that *Puruṣa* being non-composite is also devoid of three attributes and the rest as when somebody is not a 'Brāhmana' he cannot be a 'Katha'. We would not like here to argue out the thesis whether being devoid of three attributes and the rest are necessary accompaniments of *Puruṣa* being non-composite. The main point is whether a non-composite *Puruṣa* being devoid of three attributes and the rest exists. Unless some further light is thrown in this direction the argument does not seem to serve any purpose. It may at best be said as a corollary to the first one which is already shown to be untenable.

Sometimes it is argued that *Puruṣa* being *vivekī*, *avisaya* and *cetana* cannot be neutral (*mādhyastha*) (*Kārikā*-19) and indifferent (*udāsīn*) (*Kārikā*-20).[6] By differently interpreting these three terms, however, it is pointed out that these are quite consistent with neutrality and indifference.[7] But all these debates appear to be quite pointless in so far as the existence of *Puruṣa* is concerned. How does the absence of the three properties and the rest prove *Puruṣa's* existence ?

The next argument (*Adhiṣṭhānāt*) argues that as a chariot is controlled by a charioteer so also the *triguṇātmikā* (*i.e.*, *Pradhāna*) requires an *adhiṣṭhāna* (*i.e.*, *Puruṣa*). Gauḍapāda suggests that chariot can function only in so far as it is controlled and run by a charioteer. *Pradhāna* functions only when controlled by the *Puruṣa*.[8] Now here it can be pointed out that the charioteer as a controller is a living person who is an aggregate and is not free from pleasure, pain and delusion. But how can *Puruṣa* of the Sāṁkhya system which is already said to be non-composite and devoid of three attributes, etc. be said as controller ? Vācaspati, anticipating this objection replies in his usual manner saying that if the controller is *saṁghāta* or *triguṇātmaka* then it will lead to *regressus ad infinitum*. Hence in order to avoid this difficulty *Puruṣa* must be 'beyond the three attributes and independent' (*Kaumudī*-122).

All this shows that this argument too like the first argument suffers from the confusion of formal and material levels. It is argued that the controller of unintelligent *Pradhāna* must be pure intelligent *Puruṣa*. This is, no doubt, formally true. If somebody argues that matter, by definition, is moved by non-matter, *i.e.*, mind then this formal reasoning in hardly disputable since there is nothing to dispute. But the Sāṁkhya is not at all interested in exhibiting this formal reasoning. It has the further tendency to bring out the implication that this formal reasoning justifies the existence of pure intelligent *Puruṣa* as a matter-of-fact. And it is precisely here that the whole argument becomes weak.

The fourth argument (*Bhoktṛbhāvāt*) attempts to establish *Puruṣa* as enjoyer. Sāṁkhya suggests that the different things of the nature, which are the products of the *triguṇātmikā*

pradhāna, are neither agreeable or disagreeable as they contain within themselves pleasure, pain and delusion. But to whom are they agreeable or disagreeable ? Who is to experience or enjoy them ? Sāṁkhya here insists that the experiencer or enjoyer cannot be *Buddhi*, etc. since they themselves are all composed of pleasure, pain and delusion. Here the ultimate experiencer or enjoyer must be the pure Spirit which is said to be devoid of pleasure, pain and delusion. To put it in another way, from the enjoyable characteristics (*Bhoktṛbhāvat*) of the world the enjoyer (*Bhoktā*) is inferentially deduced. If a thing is enjoyable then it is argued, there must be somebody who is to enjoy it. Enjoyability, it is made out, necessarily implies enjoyer and hence if we grant the things of the world to be enjoyable then we are constrained to admit that there must be some (other than things or the world, of course) who is to enjoy these things (either actually or possibly). This inference is, however, not unchallengeable. Since it is not self-contradictory to suppose that these things of the world are enjoyable though three is none to enjoy. But even if the two expressions, 'enjoyable' and 'enjoyer' are not logically related like that of 'enjoyed' and 'enjoyer' the Sāṁkhyaites insist on an inference of 'enjoyer' from 'enjoyable'. This shows that according to them these words are formally relative and therefore belong to one type. As one correlates 'enjoyable' and 'enjoyer' in such manner the correlation between 'enjoyable' and 'scrutiniser' for example, is not possible. Supposing one agrees with the Sāṁkhya about this formal relationship between these two expressions then also the situation is not much improved. Because materially at least the relation is not proved to be valid. Here the question may be raised why at all the Sāṁkhyaites insist on a definite inference from the enjoyable to enjoyer ? Vācaspati argues that the observer is to be inferred from the visible.[9] This is alright in so far as 'observer' and 'visible' are derived from the common linguistic root 'see'. But this linguistic commonness need not lead to the factual conclusion in which Sāṁkhya is interested. I think, the Sāṁkhyaites are here victim to linguistic confusion when they press from the visibility of the things

the visualiser or observer. There is merely a common origin between the two terms so far as syntax is concerned. It does not indicate anything regarding matter-of-fact.

Moreover, as it has been pointed out elsewhere,[10] the Sāṁkhya philosophers, in this context, are also victims to certain illusions of language when they say that pleasure, pain, etc. lie in different objects of the world. One distinguishes between two expressions such as 'He gave me money' and 'It gave me pleasure'. In the first case, it is perfectly meaningful to say that he has some amount of money and he gave it to me. That means his giving money to me implies that he had money with him. Whereas 'It gave me pleasure' does not likewise mean that it had pleasantness with it. Since in both the cases one uses 'gave' the Sāṁkhya philosophers are misled to argue that meaning in both the cases must be understood in the same way, *i.e.*, 'giving pleasure' is analogous to 'giving money'. The man who gives money must have possessed money prior to giving it. Similarly the object which gives pleasure must have possessed pleasure in some way, however, mystical it may be. From all these it may be well seen that there is much oddity in ascribing pleasure, pain, etc. to the things of the world.

The last argument (*Kaivalyārthaṁ Pravṛtteḥ*) does not also seem to have any strength. It says that because "there is a tendency in all scriptures and among all intelligent persons towards 'Isolation', there must be something beyond (pleasure, etc., and hence) the Great Principle and the rest, and this is the Spirit".[11] Now one can immediately retort by following Kant's refutation of ontological argument that merely because there is a tendency for 'Isolation' this does not necessarily prove that there is actually a state of 'Isolation' which is said to be the state of the *Puruṣa*. From the idea of 'Isolation' the existence of 'Isolation' need not be validly inferred. In fact this argument unlike its predecessors even fails to keep up the formal tone and thereby ends in absurdity.

Thus all these arguments which are advanced by the Sāṁkhya philosophers fail to establish the existence of *Puruṣa*. Their failure is mainly because they have become victims to

the illusions of both logic and language. While they seek to prove the actual existence of *Puruṣa* they employ most of the arguments which are merely formal in character and do not yield any conclusion regarding matter-of-fact. Further the type of *Puruṣa* that is sought to be established by means of these arguments may not be the type of *Puruṣa* which is described in other places (*kārikā*-18, 19 and 20). But to go into that is, I think, beyond the scope of the present paper.*

References

1. The translation is made by Prof. G.N. Jha.
2. *Jñānena cā'pavargo viparād iṣyate bandhaḥ*—Iśvarakṛṣṇa *Jñānam mukti-Bhikṣu* (*Sāṁkhya Pravacana Bhāṣya*, 3/23).
3. *Na hyāpta vacannabhāse nipatanti mahāsurāh*—Aniruddha in his *Vṛtti*.
4. *Vide* : *Tattva-Kaumudī* (120) and Gauḍapāda Bhāṣya on *Kārikā*-17.
5. It is interesting to note that the great Advaitin Śaṃkara who takes Brahman as *svataḥ siddha* and is not in favour of advancing any rational argument in its support, also takes recourse to a very similar argument in order to substantiate his commentary on a passage of *Kena Upaniṣad* (Vide "*Saṁhātanām parārthatvād avagamyate srotrādinām proyokta*", I. 2. From the case that composite things exist for the need of some one else, a director of the ears, etc. (Brahman) can be inferred).
6. Prof D.D. Vadekar : "The Sāṁkhya Arguments for Puruṣa", *The Philosophical Quarterly* (Amalner), Vol. XXXII, No. 4, Jan. 1960, pp. 252-59.
7. Jagannath Das, "Logical and Metaphysical Arguments For Puruṣa In The Sāṁkhya", *The Philosophical Quarterly* (Amalner), 1961, pp. 187-92.
8. *Puruṣa Adhiṣṭhitam Pradhānam Pravartate* (Gauaḍpāda Bhāṣya on *Kāritā*-17).
9. '*Bhoktṛbhāvāt dṛṣtabhāvāt, ... iti ārthaḥ*' *Kaumudī*-124.
10. See my "Sāṃkhya Arguments For Prakṛti", *op. cit.*, p. 52.

11. '*Tasmāt kaivalyārthaṁ . . . . ātmeti sidhaṁ*', *Kaumudī*-125.

*Here I have adopted some of the materials of my earlier paper "Sāṁkhya arguments for Puruṣa" read and discussed in History of Philosophy Section of the 44th sesstion of the Indian Philosophical Congress held at Poona in 1970. The present paper was originally published in the *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. II, No. 3, 1975.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A NOTE ON SUṢUPTI

In the opinion of the Advaita Philosophers, *Suṣupti* stands for the state of dreamless sound sleep where there is neither the consciousness of the outward objects of waking experience nor the consciousness of the dreamy objects of the dream experience but simply the objectless consciousness. It is said that in this stage one is 'lifted above all desires and freed from the vexations of spirit.'[1] In order to explain the continuity of consciousness, the reality of consciousness is admitted in the *Suṣupti* stage. Moreover the continuity of consciousness is assumed for the consistent explanation of the personal identity. 'Devadatta, after good sleep, continues to be Devadatta, since his experiences unite themselves to the system, which existed at the time when he went to sleep.'[2] In short, *Suṣupti* gives only a short glimpse about the permanent unchanging self which is to be realised by the *Turīya* state. *Suṣupti* as well as *Turīya* are admitted to be not empirically known but are said to be logically inferred from the other two states. In order to explain the unity of consciousness and to intelligibly explain statements like 'I slept well' or 'I knew nothing', the Advaitins admit the existence of consciousness pure in *Suṣupti* stage. This state is not directly experienced but is said to have been indirectly proved by the above-mentioned personal statements indicating one's continuity.

There is no direct verification or empirical way of knowing whether such a state of absolute objectless knowing consciousness exists. Such memory statements like 'I slept well' or 'I knew nothing' gave us the indirect knowledge about *Suṣupti*.

But here a point may be raised, viz., can we at all establish the existence of such a state only under the basis of these memory statements ? And, what is the logical implication of memory statements ? It is said : "To speak of remembering what never happened would be self-contradictory. This does not mean, however, that one cannot think that one remembers something which in fact never happened, that memory-experiences cannot be delusive. On the contrary, it is certain that they sometimes are. For, not only are there cases in which one person's memories, or alleged memories contradict another's but even a single person's 'memories' may be contradictory. He may 'remember' that a given event occurred, while also 'remembering' that at an earlier time he 'remembered' that it did not."[3] Similarly one can say that simply by recollecting that he has slept well or he knew nothing, it does not follow that he has slept well or he knew nothing. If one's sleeping well is not logically proved from the above statement then it is too much to prove consciousness from that statement.

Besides that, it may be said that there are certain accredited methods of deciding whether a particular memory statement is true or not. But here in the case of 'I slept well' or 'I knew nothing', there is no scope for such an investigation. In fact, the person himself cannot know whether he is conscious or not in that *Suṣupti* stage. Not even any other man can enter into his mind in order to know whether he is conscious or not while he is said to be under that state. Even a man cannot be able to distinguish whether the person concerned is having dreamless sleep or dreamful sleep. So firstly, the memory statements being fallible may not prove consciousness to be present at the *Suṣupti* stage. And secondly, there is absolutely no chance for verifying whether consciousness is at all present at that stage. Strictly speaking, one cannot describe his own deep sleep state as 'this' or 'that' at any moment. Even if he does so, from this, it does not follow that the past stage must have been such.

Now, let us deal with the point from some other angle. The meaning of memory, as is generally understood by them is representative cognition (*Smṛti*). It may mean that one can remember or recollect something what one has either experi-

enced or known or learnt before. So the experience of deep sleep stage that no object is experienced, is only recollected at the later waking stage. That means, to put in other words, the experience of not experiencing any object is again presented as an object in the later waking stage in order to frame a statement like 'I knew nothing'. But if that is the case, then it follows that at the time of deep sleep even the person was conscious that he was not experiencing anything. And that will imply that at least his not experiencing anything was taken to be the object of his experience at that stage. Of course some of the Advaitins here may argue that not experiencing any object is not an object as we generally understand the term. At least it is not the same type of object as that of the external world. But do we not make statement like 'I have not experienced the murder-scene of the drama', or 'I have not seen him coming to the class'? Here, 'not experiencing' and 'not seeing' though not be called as events, still then it can be taken as the facts of our statements. And one can intelligibly be said to have experienced these facts or objects. Similarly, we can say that not experiencing any object is itself an object for the deep sleep stage. But in that case, that stage can no longer be called as the stage of objectless consciousness. So there seems to be some amount of contradiction in the Advaitins' arguments.

But why then the Advaitins are so eager to establish consciousness in this *Suṣupti* stage? That is only to fill up the gap. As it is said that the man, whatever he has experienced in the previous waking stage just before sleep, exactly recollects at the time of the later waking stage. There is a good deal of consistency between his behaviour, his temperament and his ways of framing ideas of the former waking state to the later waking state. We also call him the same man who was walking for some time, then had gone to sleep and then awoke. So for explaining the common sense notion of personal identity, it is necessary to talk all these different stages of consciousness as belonging to one person or self. The same person always lives and is conscious of his self.

But as it seems, the practical identification of a personality is not dependent on this continuity of consciousness as the

Advaitins have argued. Suppose a man in a particular time goes to sleep. Before sleep, his behaviour shows that he was conscious in the ordinary sense. But just after sleep, he has not shown us any indication of recognising things or distinguishing things. At least he is not found to be conscious in the ordinary sense of the term. Now, in this way he remains in a non-empirical conscious stage for the rest of his life, even though we find that his respiration continues and heart beats. Still he never awakes to utter 'I slept well' or 'I knew nothing'. But the Advaitins' proof of the existence of consciousness at the 'Suṣupti' stage ultimately depends only on the utterance made by the man at the subsequent waking state. From these statements they infer the existence of consciousness in it. And they further argue that if consciousness will not be shown to be present, they cannot identify Devadatta of waking stage with Devadatta of sleeping stage. But this is not the case.

Identity is not at all dependent upon consciousness. It depends on many other factors. The said man, even though he remains in sleep throughout the rest of his life and has not shown any indication to have become conscious of anything that we are conscious, still then we may safely admit that he is the same Devadatta, because he has the same physical form and has the same type of respiration that we have and the same beating of the heart as ours. To be a person that Devadatta is, it is not necessary alone that he must always be conscious. Even a sheer dead body without any life can easily be identified provided it is not decomposed. "Men die and their death does not at once destroy the identity of their bodies".[4] From this it is evident that consciousness is not a necessary factor to identify a person. It should not be understood that the physical body alone is the criterion of identity. It is said, "The fact that peoples' physical characteristics tend to be distinctive, and that many constant features commonly persist throughout what is only a gradual process of change, makes this, as we have noted, a practical method of identification. As a criterion, it is, however, neither necessary nor sufficient".[5] Of course there may be some strict Advaitins who may argue that if consciousness is not present in a man we are not prepard to accept him as the same man. Then I would say that the

Advaitins avoid this point by arbitrary will and not by any logical argument.

The confusion of the Advaita Philosophers becomes more explicit if we argue a step forward. To be at life, according to them, means to be necessarily conscious. But this is not so simple because we can meaningfully say that somebody is living even though he is unconscious. Even to exist is not a necessary fact. Devadatta, who is said to be existing, might not have existed. "Clearly it is in no case a necessary fact that a certain person exists."[6]

Some Advaitins may say that all that so far are argued here are to reject the empirical consciousness at the *Suṣupti* stage but not the non-empirical or metaphysical consciousness. The consciousness that is present there is not the same as waking consciousness. It is the very basis of all waking and dreaming states. It is eternal and universal. As Prof. Hiriyanna says, "There is in it the same withdrawal of normal consciousness, the same absence of desires and the manifestation of almost the same bliss. But while the self fully reveals itself in the fourth state, the experience of dreamless sleep is extremely dim."[7]

This universal consciousness which is the positive bliss as such, is not only present in any particular man but in every man, in everything of the objective world. It is the '*Brahman*' of the Advaitins. Only the *Yogins* or mystics can realise it. But the experience of the mystics, as they describe, often differs. But it is said in defence that the experience is indescribable (*Avyakta*). That means, to say more simply, the realisation of such consciousness is not open for all; it is extremely private, subjective and limited to those few Advaitins alone. They may say that that universal consciousness can only be felt or realised. But that means, they have tried to escape without giving any logical reasons but simply by believing so. They may believe the nature of reality to be such and such but from this it does not follow that actually the nature of reality is as they believe. It is not self-contradictory to suppose that one may believe in something and yet the thing is not there.

So, from all these, the weak points in the Advaita reasoning become explicit. In order to explain the common sense

notion of identity they establish the continuity of consciousness by proving consciousness at the *Suṣupti* stage. But all these, as shown by them, are not logically sound. It may appeal the common man who is unaware of logic. But certainly it is not at all enlightening from the philosophical point of view. It may be emotively significant but surely not cognitively true.*

References

1. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 160.
2. Ibid., p. 155.
3. A.J. Ayer, *The Problem of Knowledge*, pp. 150-51 (Pelican Series).
4. Ibid., p. 189.
5. Ibid., pp. 188-89.
6. Ibid., p. 179.
7. Hiriyanna, *Outline of Indian Philosophy*, p. 72.

*The paper was originally published in *Vani Vikash*, Ist issue, 1964-65.

CHAPTER TWELVE

A NOTE ON THE ABĀDHITĀRTHAVIṢAYAṀ JÑĀNAM

It is well known that Dharmarāja in his *Vedānta Paribhāṣā* makes an attempt to formulate clearly the Advaitic account of *pramā* (valid knowledge) by suggesting that the object of valid knowledge is that which is not sublated by any other object of knowledge (*abādhitārthaviṣayaṁ jñānam*). According to him *pramā* is of two types : *smṛtivyābrutaṁ pramā* (valid knowledge that excludes memory) and *smṛtisādhāraṇaṁ pramā* (valid knowledge that includes memory). The former is defined in terms of *anadhigatābādhitārthaviṣayaṁ jñānam* while the latter is defined in terms of *abādhitā-rtha-viṣayaṁ jñānam*. In other words, *smṛtivyābrutaṁ pramā*, valid knowledge that excludes memory, is regarded as a knowledge the object of which is neither sublated nor already known as an object, and *smṛti sādhāraṇaṁ pramā*, valid knowledge that includes memory, is regarded as a knowledge the object of which is only not sublated by any other object of knowledge.

From this it is clear that nonsublatability or *abādhitatva* is common to both definitions of valid knowledge. Any piece of knowledge (whether derived from perceptual and the like sources or from the source of memory) is regarded as valid only on the distinguishing condition that the object, which is asserted to be known through this knowledge, must not be sublated by any other object of knowledge. For instance, when there is the knowledge of some object, such as a snake, this knowledge continues to be valid as long as the object of knowledge, the snake, is not sublated by another object of knowledge; that is, a rope. This means that the knowledge of

the rope as a snake must be granted as valid as long as it is not known as a rope, and consequently the object of knowledge as snake is not withdrawn or sublated. In this connection, very often it is pointed out that dream experiences appear to be real so long as they are not replaced by waking experience, and erroneous perception continues to be valid so long as it is not substituted by any subsequent perception and is revealed as erroneous.

This explanation clearly indicates that *pramātva* or validity in the context of Advaita epistemology stands for *abādhitatva* and in this way is distinct from *yathārthatva* (knowledge being in full accord with the object known or correct presentation of the object of knowledge), a point so elaborately formulated by the Naiyāyikas. The Nyāya philosophers, as against the Advaita point of view, maintain that *pramātva* or validity consists in knowing the object of knowledge in its own forms. The object (*artha*) is to be known in that form of attributes in which it actually exists. From this point of view, the snake-knowledge of a rope is clearly invalid, and the rope-knowledge of a rope is alone valid. It is not necessary to regard the snake-knowledge of a rope as valid as long as snake-knowledge is not replaced by the rope-knowledge. Some different explanation is, therefore, necessary for the Naiyāyikas to account for the so-called snake-knowledge of rope. This knowledge, as a matter of fact, is purely invalid as it is incorrect (*ayathārtha*). There is only an *apparent sense of validity* (*yathārthābhāsa*) because of the confusion resulting from mispredication or misattribution. The snake-characteristics are mistakenly applied over the 'given' and that is why there is the knowledge of an object as different from what it is (*anyathākhyāti*).

Hence, this account suggests that *pramātva* or validity lies only on the point of *yathārthatva* and not on *abādhitatva*, in the context of Nyāya epistemology; and it is this point which sharply distinguishes the Nyāya position from that of Advaita. Many modern writers on classical Indian epistemology very often overlook this vital point of difference and mistakenly create the impression that for the *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*, *abādhitatva* is the same as *yathārthava*. For example, D.M. Datta,

The Six Ways of Knowing, 2d ed. (Calcutta : Calcutta University Press, 1972), p. 20.

But the point is, Dharmaraja has nowhere used the terms '*abādhitatva*' and '*yathārthatva*' interchangeably or synonymously. As far as the phenomenal point of view is concerned, all the empirically derived valid knowledges must be based on *abādhitatva* of their respective objects of knowledge (*arthaviṣayakam jñānam*). In this sense it is suggested that 'all our empirical judgements of knowledge carry the logical possibility of being falsified. So long as those are not falsified, they are treated as valid. It is not correspondence, not adequate or correct presentation of the object (*yathārthatā*) that is ever accepted in this context.

And the more interesting point to notice in the case of Advaita epistemological tradition is this, that Advaitins do not hesitate to regard all the phenomenal account of knowledge as invalid from this absolute or ultimate standpoint. Here, as far as the knowledge of Brahman is concerned, it is not, therefore, based on *abādhitatva* or nonsublatability but on *trikālābādhita* or that which can never be sublated, either in past or in present or in future. In other words, this implies that for the realization of Brahman, which is never a case of knowledge in the empirical sense, the condition of *abādhita* is never advocated, but rather *abādhya* or nonsublatable in principle is found to be preferred.

So we conclude that the Advaita epistemologist's talk of *abādhitārthaviṣayaṁ jñānam* does not imply *yathārthaviṣayaṁ jñānam*. It is not, of course, suggested thereby that *abādhitatva* is a better defining characteristic than *yathārthatva* or vice versa. That point requires a separate discussion and is beyond the scope of the present note.*

Reference

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

A STUDY IN THE ARGUMENTS FROM THEOLOGY WITH REFERENCE TO HUME AND ŚAṂKARA

Hume is well known as a critic of either morality based on religion or religion based on morality. In fact he is one of those few philosophers who have most forcefully argued both as conceptually independent. It is he who has fully exploded all that is passed as religious belief but actually nothing but pretension to truth. In what follows I shall refer to his treatment of religious argument particularly that is usually known as the argument from design.

I

In his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion,* Hume has, through the mouth of the character Cleanthes, shown that God's existence can be proved from what one extracts from his observations of the world. Cleanthes takes the whole world to be one great machine, highly subtle and complicated having infinite number of smaller machines beyond the comprehensibility of human sense and understanding. All such various machines and also their minutest parts are so well adjusted to each other and with such accuracy that one is simply struck by those. This wonderful adaptation of means to ends, throughout the whole nature, resembles exactly, though it goes far beyond the productions of human capacity, of human design, thought and comprehension. Since therefore, the effects resemble each other, Cleanthes has argued analogically, that the causes must also resemble ; and further the creation of nature is similar to the mind of men : though

possessed of much higher faculties in proportion to the type of work of nature which he has executed.

Hume has taken this argument to prove the existence of God through design and has tried to be critical about this argument throughout the *Dialogues*. He has clearly shown that causal arguments are based on regularities that are experienced. But they are not available in this case for the reason that one does not become acquainted with a multiplicity of worlds. Even if one presses on analogy that similar effects must have similar causes one does not have any necessity to conclude that the universe was designed by God. Nobody has any such experience. It is, of course, true that machines are constructed by human beings who are living and who work in co-operation and move by trial and error and thus improve upon their designs. But God who is supposed to be incorporeal cannot likewise be regarded as a designer. There are many other counter possibilities which Hume has referred to in this connection. Why not we maintain that the universe is due to the combined efforts of many gods; or why not even it be the first rude essay of some infant deity who later on abandons it and many such other moves that are cited by Hume in the mouth of Philo, other important character in the *Dialogues*.

Moreover, Hume has argued that from the analogy discussed earlier it does not at all follow that the whole universe is a machine or that there is any purpose which it serves. According to him our experience of the world reveals that matter can sustain that perpetual agitation that seems essential to it 'and yet maintain a constancy in the forms, which it produces'. Why should one not suppose, he argues, that matter be credited with a force which enables it to develop out of what we may suppose to have been an original chaos into an order that appears at times. Hume finds no reason as to why this theory be not preferred to the unverifiable and practically useless conjecture of a supernatural agent or God.

It has been remarked by modern sympathetic writers on Hume like Ayer[1] that the significance of Hume is that he has tried to preserve philosophy distinctly away from the 'licence of fancy and hypothesis' into which theology falls. According to him one of the principal aims of Hume's is not only to

discredit a more superstitious types of theism but of any form of religious belief.[2]

II

Udayana, a celebrated Nyāya thinker, has tried to prove the existence of God by number of arguments in his classic work : *Nyāya Kusumāñjali.*[3] Out of several arguments one prominent argument : *kāryāt* (i.e. from the effect) seeks to justify the existence of God as the final cause of the world-effect. It is obviously a causal argument advanced by the theologian which is based upon the idea that every phenomenon has to be interpreted causally. And likewise it is argued that the whole world is one effect which must have been caused and for that God's existence has got to be assumed under necessity. The theologian does not here find any reason to ask for the cause of God because God, by definition, is regarded as Causasui or the uncaused cause.

The Nyāya thinker not only finds necessity of accommodating the concept of God in his system from a causal point of view but also so far as his specific ontological position is concerned, i.e. amidst the acceptance of atoms, souls and the principle of *adṛṣta.* God has been inferred as the manufacturer of the whole universe in the sense of combining different atoms into complex whole, adjusting the relation between the soul and atomic complex and also regulating the whole course of *adṛṣta* in the sense of fitting it to the case of each psycho-physical complex or embodied soul. Such regulator-God (*karma-phala adhyakṣa*) is assumed to have been proved from another argument also advanced in this regard : *āyojanāt.* This argument, in certain respect, resembles the well known argument from design.

It may be interesting to note here that though not proving God but the Sāṁkhyāits have tried to prove the existence of Puruṣa on the basis of the things of the world being composite (*saṁghāta parārthatvāt*).[4] As the different composite things are meant for another so also it is argued that the whole natural phenomena (Prakṛti) must be for the sake of one that is Puruṣa in this context. This argument can be well seen as

though not strictly a design argument of the theological type yet it has some similarity with it.

It is Śaṃkara, for instance, who is found in the classical Indian philosophical perspective as very much critical about such arguments. Both in his *Brahma-sūtra Bhāṣya* (specially in *Tarkapāda*) and *Gīta Bhāṣya* he is very much against such argumentations on the ground that both causal and design arguments basing upon experience are completely incapable of proving a transcendental being like God. He holds that causality is a principle which is applicable in empirical context. And in this sense it is perfectly sound to hold that every event has a cause. But for that matter to assume the whole universe to be an event and then to assume for its cause in a transcendental sense that is moving from empirical to trans-empirical plane is logically most unwarranted. Here such arguments are nothing but unnecessary instances of extrapolation. So also in a limited and specific context out of perceiving some arranged set of things even if it is normal to expect the agent behind all such arrangements who is in principle at least observable, there seems to be no sound reason to suppose an imperceptible *Puruṣa* or designer-God. Inductive generalisations are carried within spatio-temporal framework and any attempt to bypass it brings nothing but incoherency and incongruity. In this sense Śaṃkara himself never applies causal framework so far as Brahman is concerned and in this regard is a critic of both *satkāryavāda* and *asatkāryavāda*. He clearly goes with his predecessor Gouḍapāda in tacitly accepting the doctrine of *ajātivāda* (no-creation) and condemns creation-theorists as confusing and senseless ones (*Sruṣti cintakāḥ nirarthakāḥ*).[5]

III

Hume and Śaṃkara are centuries apart. They are both historically and geographically quite foreign to each other. Yet both of them reveal definite critical attitude in dealing with the aforesaid type of theological arguments. It is to be noted that without properly going through the logical basis of Śaṃkara's arguments many have branded him as a theologian

whom so far as his philosophical views are concerned he is very much opposed.

One can notice here that Hume's arguments against design argument mostly rest on certain extra-logical considerations, though giving an impression of a sort of logicism. Hume argues that if machines are constructed by living human beings, one should not conclude that God be conceived as the designer of the whole world-machine because that is either not experienced or could have been supposed as either due to the combined efforts of many gods or the first rude essay of some infant deity or in some other way. Now such arguments of Hume clearly do not reveal the impossibility of speculating God through design on logical ground but only show that there is no basis of experience for such speculations and further such speculations are not the only speculations but there could be others. But if there could be others then it does not thereby establish the theologian's claim as wrong beyond all doubt. It only shows that other possibilities are equally open. So Hume's point of view does not seem to be discrediting any form of religious belief (at least on logical ground) as Ayer has supposed.

But in case of Śaṃkara one finds that the criticism against the causal and other arguments is posed purely from the stand-point of logic[6] without any extra-logical considerations. It is not so because no experience enables us to verify Puruṣa who is supposed to have used the nature or God who is supposed to be the regulator of the whole universe and the karmic principle. Śaṃkara finds no justification in accepting Sāṁkhya Puruṣa or Nyāya Īśwara because the logic of inference is such that it cannot be extended from empirical to transcendental plane; the logic of inductive generalisation is such that it cannot be extended from the observable realm to unobservable realm. It is because of this unwarranted extrapolation the creationist's argument is shown to be unacceptable. Thus the whole thrust of Śaṃkara's argument seems to be resting on purely logical consideration.*

References

1. A.J. Ayer, *Hume* (Past Master Series, Oxford, O.U.P., 1980), pp. 95-96.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
3. Vide *Nyāya Kusumāñjali*, V. 1.
4. Vide Īśwara Kṛṣṇa, *Sāṁkhya Kārikā*, 17.
5. Dr. G. Misra, *The Advaita Conception of Philosophy : its method, scope and limits* (pub: B. Misra, Bhubaneswar, 1978), pp. 14-15 and 128.
6. Here the word logic need not be understood in rigid formal sense but can be taken in wider sense of philosophical logic employed by the philosophical analysts.

*This paper was presented at the All India Seminar on Empiricism and Rationalism, East and West held in Andhra University, Waltair in 1981.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE ROLE OF REASON IN THE INTEGRAL PHILOSOPHY OF SRI AUROBINDO

Though Sri Aurobindo, in his Integral philosophy, ultimately assigns supreme status to intuition, yet he emphasises the role of reason quite extensively throughout his philosophical writings. No only he tries co criticise the rival philosophical positions by the application of reason, but also he employs reason in a peculiar manner to establish his own philosophical standpoint. In what follows, an attempt will be made for a critical evaluation of this role of reason in the Integral philosophy of Sri Aurobindo.

I

By intellectual conviction, he prefers spiritualistic monism. Both dualism as well as pluralism, according to him, are not rationally acceptable; for in both there is the logical difficulty in explaining relation between different entities. It ever remains unintelligible as to how or why the independent atoms or entities are related. Even, it is not rationally adequate to hold that plural number of psychological atoms or monads are in perfect adjustment because of pre-established harmony. As, in that case too, the role of queen monad for primarily initiating perfect design and adjustment remains somewhat rationally unclear.

Instead of either advancing pluralistic materialism of spiritualism, some have offered a dualistic account in which one spirit and one material stuff are ultimately accepted. But even in that case also there is the same difficulty of accounting

relation between spirit and matter. The philosophy of Sāṁkhya, for example, admits material *Prakṛti* and sentient *Puruṣa*, and then tries to explain the world-phenomena by positing a sort of relation between these two entities. But, if these two entities are of entirely different nature, then how at all these are related ? The explanation that there is no real contact but only a reflectional relation between the two, does not seem to be rationally convincing.

Because of rational difficulties found in both dualistic and pluralistic accounts. Some have taken recourse to a form of materialistic monism. Some noted philosophers of science favour such a view and maintain that the ultimate principle of existence can either be said as matter or energy. Philosopher like Samuel Alexander holds that unconscious matrix of Space-Time is the ultimate source out of which all things and events are evolved. But, according to Sri Aurobindo, such explanation offered by both scientists as well as metaphysicians are, no doubt, rationally unconvincing. The presence of order and harmony in the world-process clearly reveal that the entire world-phenomena can never be an outcome of unconscious matter or energy or even Space-Time by a series of chance-factors. Sri Aurobindo thinks that the materialistic hypothesis of evolving mind or consciousness out of pure unconscious matter is logically inconceivable. The scientific theory of evolution which attempts to bring out everything from unconscious matter seems to be going against the basic rational principle and thus becomes rather mysterious. The defect of materialistic procedure is its onesidedness. Instead of rationally explaining the origin of all the diverse aspects of empirical phenomena, materialistic monism, by only positing matter in the ultimate level, commits a fallacy of reductionism.

In order to overcome the defects of materialistic account, some advocate the opposite thesis of spiritualistic hypothesis. According to them the ultimate principle of existence must be identified as pure conscious spirit out of whom this manifold world is thought to have been evolved or created. But, if from the cogent rational point of view, the outcome of spirit from material stuff is objectionable then for the same reason also the evolution or creation of matter out of pure spirit

remains somewhat inexplicable. Spiritualism, presented in this radical form, also seems to be suffering from the same fallacy of reductionism.

All this shows that the conception of Reality can never reasonably be speculated as simple matter or mere spirit. Because of this, some prefer a sort of agnostic conclusion. To them, since Reality can never be intelligibly grasped through any of the ordinarily available means like senses or reason, it must be treated as unknown and unknowable. But, here Sri Aurobindo points out, such agnostic conclusion has also its own rational limitation. Instead of attempting to solve the fundamental problem, it only leaves the issue completely undecided.

Some, by being too much encouraged by spiritualistic framework, advance an extreme subjectivistic thesis, according to which it is asserted that the ultimate principle of existence is only a pure subject and consequently the entire objective world is considered as nothing but unreal or apparent. Here also Sri Aurobindo takes up the rational procedure and argues that "if the objects are unreal, the subjective status of the basic reality would also be unreal".[1] In this connection, the indeterminate absolutists like Advaitins maintain that Brahman, the ultimate Reality is beyond all descriptions and determinations. This non-dual principle of ultimate existence (*advaita sattā*) is bereft of any duality, diversity and multiplicity. Since this Brahman is *nirguṇa*, it can never be determined by means of any predicative knowing-process. That is why it can neither be comprehended through ordinary course of sense nor through conceptually determined reason. It is said, therefore, that Brahman can only be directly intuited. "To know Brahman is to be Brahman."

But Sri Aurobindo, even if he finally approves a form of Advaitism which he names as *Pūrṇa Advaita* (Integral non-dualism), yet rejects the classical Advaitism on some rational grounds. Classical Advaita, according to him, in lieu of reasonably accounting the world of multiplicity has only succeeded in avoiding it. It is not satisfactory, at least from the intellectual point of view, to hold that Reality devoid of all determinate qualities is the source of the world of

multiplicity. To say that Brahman alone is real and the world is an illusion (*vivarta*) due to *māyā* is rather vague and unsatisfactory. Spiritualistic monism that completely denies the reality of matter is, according to Sri Aurobindo, self-stultifying. By interpreting the classical Upaniṣadic passages in a different way, he develops his Integral philosophy and maintains that the material world of multiplicity is not annulled or negated but is rather integrated and harmonised in the very bosom of the Infinite Spirit.

II

All these show that Sri Aurobindo advances the technique of reason to criticise the rival philosophical standpoints. Though the different rational grounds which he raises against other competing views are not entirely new and in some cases such type of difficulties which he enumerates are not found to be fully unanswerable, yet the point, however, still remains that Sri Aurobindo depends upon reason for criticising the alternative philosophical conceptions.

He seems to be quite convinced that such philosophical alternatives cannot stand to rational scrutiny. It is in this background, he develops his own philosophical view and holds that Brahman is both indeterminate as well as capable of self-determination. It is indeterminate in the sense that it cannot be limited by any determination whatsoever. Any description or predication about Brahman necessarily falls short of it. But this need not suggest, Sri Aurobindo asserts, that Brahman by itself is incapable of self-determination. Negative descriptions of Brahman, as upheld by classical Advaitins, unnecessarily limits Brahman to the extent that it has no freedom to express or determine itself. Here Sri Aurobindo takes up the Upaniṣadic passage "*Sarvam khalu idam Brahma*" to support his interpretation of Integralism. Thus spiritualistic monism, according to him, is not necessarily opposed to the very acceptance of matter. Rather, as said before, matter with all its qualitative distinctions is integrated in the very bosom of spiritual Absolute.

But perhaps it is here that Sri Aurobindo faces the gravest challenge from the rational point of view. So long, he has

disapproved the alternative philosophical views by applying the standard or reason and this would naturally suggest that his own philosophical view should at least be free from rational difficulties. His philosophy should at least be rationally consistent. But, as critics have pointed out, Sri Aurobindo's suggestion that Brahman can be both indeterminate as well as determinate, both immanent as well as transcendent, both spiritual as well as bearing materiality within itself may satisfy a sort of theistic attitude but is surely not rationally unchallengeable. Reason can never conceive the Absolute of having two contradictory features. The basic principle of contradiction shows that Absolute can never be both indeterminate as well as determinate.

Sri Aurobindo tries to overcome this difficulty by pointing out that two contradictory predicates like determinate and indeterminate cannot be applied to the same substance as long as one is confined to the limited vision of senseperception. Even the conceptual apparatus designed by the finite and limited mind is also fully inadequate to grasp the integration of such allegedly opposite predicates. According to him, in a higher supramental consciousness there is "the spiritual realisation of the unity of all".[2] The common usual course of reason is regulated through a finite and limited perspective. But as far as the Absolute reality is concerned, Sri Aurobindo thinks that it is instead of being known through such a limited mechanism can only be grapsed by what he calls as 'the logic of the Infinite'. This logic of the Infinite, Sri Aurobindo claims, is far more subtle and complex in its operations. It comprehends everything at one glance and the basic role it plays is to unify and integrate all sorts of diversities and multiplicities into one integrated whole. Recently Prof. Chubb, in one of his articles on Sri Aurobindo, attempts to make a sympathetic interpretation of Sri Aurobindo's point of view and shows that the logic of the Infinite is characteristically different from the logic of the finite. He writes :

"......The categories and presuppositions of thought and the criterion of rational adequacy that one should adopt must correspond to or reflect the nature or structure of the object

that one is trying to understand. Thought, when it moves in the world of external objects, naturally adopts a criterion of truth which is in conformity with the finiteness and limitation of the objects that constitute the world. Its logic reflects the logic of finite existence...... But the being of the Infinite is complete and self-contained. It has no ragged edges that point beyond itself. Its nature is such that it can support a quality without being compelled to reject what in the logic of finite existence would have to be treated as a contrary quality."[3]

Thus it is maintained that the principle of contradiction pertaining to the realm of finite mental experience becomes completely useless in the context of the total experience of the Infinite. What seems to be illogical from the finite perspective can thus be shown to be perfectly logical when viewed from the point of view of Absolute. In this way, Sri Aurobindo claims that his philosophy of Integralism is not devoid of reason. Only he cautiously adds, it is not to be evaluated from the narrow perspectives of finite and limited reason.

III

But in spite of such grand explanations offered by both Sri Aurobindo and his sympathetic interpreters, it no doubt remains still a problem to have a consistent account of reason in the entire philosophical background of Sri Aurobindo's thought. While criticising the rival philosophical alternatives, he chooses to apply the basic ordinary principles of reason, (what he means as the reason of finite existence) over these alternatives and then concludes that such alternatives do not adequately stand to rational scrutiny. In view of such difficulties, he prescribes for a different philosophical point of view which at least is expected to be free from any such difficulty raised from the standpoint of finite or limited reasoning. But surprisingly when the question of evaluating the philosophy of Integralism is raised from the standpoint of finite reasoning, Sri Aurobindo seems to avoid this question on the ground that such criterion of finite reasoning is completely limited and inadequate in its scope to correctly estimate the logical structure of the realm of Absolute which is by its own nature

something infinite and as such can never be estimated through such finite standard of reason.

But here the rival metaphysicians who offer a different view regarding the nature of the Absolute can equally claim that it is not proper on the part of their critics to apply the basic principle of reason for estimating their philosophical standpoint because of the same ground that such basic principles of reason only deal with the realm of finite existence whereas their philosophies are only aimed at the Absolute or Infinite existence. There seems to be no valid point on the part of Sri Aurobindo in criticising the rival forms of Absolutism by applying the criterion of finite reasoning and at the same time defending his own philosophical vision not by means of this finite reasoning but by means of what he calls as the logic of the Infinite.

Moreover, what exactly is the basis of this logic of the Infinite? If it is by definition absolutely different from the logic of the finite through the help of which all kinds of ordinary course of reasoning is regulated, then it can never of course be properly grasped so long as one is tied down to the sphere of finite reasoning. And if this is granted, then all such rival absolutists can be justified in holding that their views too are not to be judged from the narrow perspectives of finite reason. Absolute reality cannot be intellectually comprehended on the ground that the standard of intellect or reason is limited in its application and therefore the proper method for realising the nature of Absolute is not intellect but intuition. However any form of intuitionism, at this level, seems to have its own limitations. If different intuitionists claim different accounts of reality then it is obviously difficult to accept one and reject the other. Since the standard of reason is already withdrawn and in the level of intuition, each view is either as strong as another or as weak as another.

Sri Aurobindo, though ultimately favours an intuitive approach for developing his philosophical standpoint and in this respect he sides with all those classical philosophers who avoid the tracts of intellectual reason on the ground that reality can never be known through finite or limited mode of reason, he also modifies the sense of intuitionism so far as

his own philosophy is concerned. His intuitionism, though is thus different from intellectualism in the finite sense, yet is not same as the classical form of intuitionism which totally rejects the place of reason. He tries to accommodate reason witnin the sphere of intuitionism by suggesting that the Absolute though cannot be grasped through finite reason, yet is not however to be construed as absolutely devoid of reason. The reason that is relevant for estimating the nature of Absolute is not finite but infinite. It is the infinite logic that regulates the sphere of Absolute and through such supra-rational basis the reality can properly be comprehended. While classical intuitionists only succeed in rejecting the course of finite reason so far as the realisation of Absolute is concerned, they have not been successful in providing an alternate course of reason for clearly grasping the nature of Absolute. Sri Aurobindo, by advocating the logic of the infinite, claims to offer a supra-rationalbasis for his philosophy of integral absolutism. Prof. Chubb, in this connection, remarks :

"......There have been schools of thought in India which have regarded these widely contrasting view as *somehow* reconcilable and, in spiritual experience, actually reconciled, but what they have not given us is the principle or the logic of this reconciliation. This is provided in what Sri Aurobindo calls "the logic of the Infinite".[4]

But it seems that this principle or the logic of reconciliation is nowhere elaborately stated. Simply by maintaining in nn *a apriori* manner, that the Infinite Absolute is to be comprehended not through finite logic but through infinite logic, one does not obviously get any clear idea about the detailed workings of this infinite logical order. The manner in which it is so far presented in the different writings of Sri Aurobindo and his supporters clearly shows that the operation of this logical order is neither conducted deductively nor inductively. Of course, it may be shown that since the logic of the Infinite is characteristically different from the finite or limited logic and its sphere of application is not finite realm of existence but the Absolute itself, there is no poi it in expecting its operation to be either deductive or inductive. Rather the insistence for accounting and explaining all issues of life in terms of these

limited intellecual procedure seems to be an undue demand. It is perhaps in this context the talk of supra-mental level is advocated by Sri Aurobindo and other like-minded philosophers. The logic of the Infinite is no doubt fully different from the logic of the finite. But that does not itself prove its invalidity.

This kind of defence, on closer analysis, seems to be not quite clear. For, even if one concedes to the point that mere difference of the logic of the Infinite from that of finite does not justify the invalidity of the former, it is to be marked also that this by itself, does not prove its validity either. Whether the talk about the logic of the Infinite is at all plausible, or whether the talk of reason in a supra-mental sense is at all tenable, are to be decided by investigating and analysing the use of these terms like logic and reason in such contexts. This kind of investigation and analysis can be undertaken by taking into consideration the ways in which such terms are ordinarily used. If none of the ordinary uses of these terms is found to be acceptable to such philosophers who want to use them in an extraordinary sense, then such stipulative uses of theirs can, however, be granted if they are successful enough to show both the essentiality as well as workability of such prescriptive uses. Unless these things are executed in the intellectual field quite extensively it seems perhaps too much to assert the plausibility of the logic of the Infinite. The use of the term 'logic' in such context may have some emotional appeal but does not seem to be rationally justifying. Rather there is every possibility to hold the view that reason or logic interpreted in this supra-mental sense does not actually supply any rational foundation for the philosophy of Integralism. Advocacy of reason, in this light, seems to be in no way better than the outright acceptance of intuition.*

References

1. The Life Divine (U.S. Edn.), p. 80.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 289.

3. "Sri Aurobindo as the Fulfilment of Hinduism", *International Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. XII, No. 2, June 1972, p. 240.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 240.

* Originally published in *Bharati*, Utkal University Journal—Humanities, Vol. VI, No. 11, December 1972.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

SRI AUROBINDO ON NATIONALISM AND RELIGION—AN APPRAISAL

It has been held that for Sri Aurobindo nationalism is not to be understood only in terms of political connotation. So far as his writings are concerned one finds nationalism being identified as 'religion' or as 'the passionate aspiration for the realisation of that divine unity'.[1] These expressions have, however, given rise to some sort of conflicting estimation of Sri Aurobindo's point of view. While some admirers feel satisfied in taking these expressions as establishing spiritualistic or idealistic nationalism other critics, without making a careful and comprehensive study, interpret these as pointing at vague mysticism and visionary esotericism. To them such an account is least satisfactory. Rather it has, by way of assimilating nationalism with religion, brought unnecessary confusion. In what follows, I shall try to point out that a careful study of Sri Aurobindo's writing on the subject would reveal the irrelevancy of both the approaches and would justify another interpretation.

I

It is, of course, true that Sri Aurobindo, though rightly acknowledged as a great seer, is not an academic thinker. That is probably the reason why his thoughts are not often presented in a clear intellectual procedure. His thoughts are, however, found to be at times very much revealing. Yet there are several occasions where one feels that he has not taken sufficient care

to go by the plausible intellectual track. For instance, it is worthy to note that though Sri Aurobindo criticises the rival metaphysical views by means of reason, he himself avoids reason and attempts to justify his own point of view through meta-rational procedure.[2]

To a student of political thought Sri Aurobindo's identification of nationalism with "religion that has come from God"[3] may appear as somewhat visionary. Nationalism is a political concept. One may, it is true, find some points of contact between religious and political concepts. But for that if one holds that the two concepts are identical then this would clearly be a point of controversy. Here it may be argued that by maintaining nationalism as religion the great seer is not, of course, identifying the two but only draws our attention to certain important and striking points of contact. Or, one may say that for Sri Aurobindo the concept of nationalism, unless it is understood with a background of religious setting, is bound to be incoherent.

But it can be noted here that in this changed version also the assimilation of nationalism with religion seems to be not free from further questions. Religion, as it is commonly understood, stands for a system of faith and worship of superhuman controlling power, whereas nationalism stands for some sort of patriotic feeling. The feeling of nationalism is grounded upon a collective decision to become united in order to form a distinctive government with a separate political establishment. There seems to be at least no logical necessity to presuppose some sort of superhuman religious support for the establishment of the feeling of nationalism. If at all in the writings of some of the medieval political thinkers the impression has been created that politics is only a handmaid of religion and theology, that does not at all guarantee the saying that nationalism is religion. Rather, the subsequent modern political writings have effectively shown the weakness of such an impression and the talk of religious supremacy over political issues are viewed as detrimental to the proper understanding of both religious and political concepts.

From this angle at least the political concept of nationalism, instead of being intelligible in a trans-human and mystical

plane, becomes plausible only in a human setting. If religion stands for the acknowledgement of some superhuman, supernatural and transcendental power or being then it seems clear that nationalism being purely an issue within the human context does not have any definite relation with if. It this is granted then it seems too much to assert nationalism as religion.

II

But it may be observed here that by viewing nationalism as religion Sri Aurobindo is not simply describing what nationalism is. There seems to be clearly a tone of prescription. It is true that nationalism is a political concept. But what Sri Aurobindo seems to suggest here is that it is not to be understood merely in terms of political connotation. He does not deny the basis of patriotic feeling for the cause of nationalism. In this context he seems to have pointed out some further important issue which he considers as something fundamental to the proper analysis of the concept of nationalism. If nationalism is only viewed in terms of separate political units then that would definitely bring a sense of hostility and jealousy among different nations. It is not only immoral but also impractical that any nation can sustain itself by overpowering and subjugating other nations. There are any number of historical evidence which reveal the impracticability of such radical sense of nationalism. It is reasonable and not simply prudential that a nation has to adjust with other nations.

It, therefore, seems proper to lay bare the rational basis of such a prescriptive judgement—that nationalism is religion. It is to be understood not descriptively but prescriptively. It is true that a religious rendering of the concept of nationalism becomes evident from certain expressions of Sri Aurobindo. He has not only taken nationalism as religion but also has viewed nation as *shakti* or power. The divine conception of motherland is indicated in his talk regarding *Bhawani Mandir*. All these seem to have built a strong ground for a religious or theological rendering of nationalism. That is why some have taken the view that according to Sri

Aurobindo nationalism is spiritualistic.[4] To him political freedom is not to be viewed as something contrary to spiritualism. He says : "By our political freedom we shall once more recover our spiritual freedom".[5]

This statement has, no doubt, given certain strength for a spiritualistic interpretation of nationalism. And once this interpretation gains ground, critics seem to have certain scope to point out that spiritualistic nationalism is vague, transcendental and is the outcome of some fundamental confusion between the conceptual frameworks of politics and religion. But on closer analysis it may be pointed out here that spiritualistic rendering of nationalism is not necessarily vague and transcendental. To emphasize some closer points of contact between nationalism and religion is not, however, to imply that a transcendental, dehumanistic and supernatural form of spiritualism is its legitimate consequence. As a matter of fact if one carefully studies the writings of Sri Aurobindo in a more comprehensive manner, without simply depending upon certain stray passages, then it would seem that spiritualistic or even religious rendering of the concept of nationalism does not in any way disfigure the political framework in which the concept of nationalism has its basis.

By emphasizing the spiritualistic foundation of nationalism Sri Aurobindo does not propagate some sort of anti-physicalism. Spiritualism, he clearly maintains, is not to be construed as something anti-physical. In this connection he writes :

> "Spiritual energy is not on this earth a thing apart but reposes and draws upon physical energies. It was an ebb in the spiritual sentiment which resulted in a complete physical nervousness with Arjuna on the eve of the great battle of Kurukshetra, and one spiritual ideal worked out in Gita is that if you allow any physical timidity to intervene between you and your duty all spiritual possibility is gone."[6]

This shows that spiritualism, according to Sri Aurobindo, is not based on some shadowy mystical plane but it is, in a very important sense, having a pragmatic or practical import. But forming an opinion that "political freedom must aim at

spiritual consummation", he does not seem to have indicated that politics is to be completely fused in transcendental dehumanistic spiritualism. By advocating nationalism as religion he does not seem to have supported the view that a nationalist, in order to be true to his cause, must submit to some transcendental, superhuman agency at the cost of human welfare. His advocacy for spiritualism is never a mark of escapist tendency.

Religion is viewed by him in a definite technical sense. It is to be clearly distinguished from its usual connotation of supernaturalism. To him, it is not the religion having the theological credo or dogma, it is the religious spirit that matters. In other words, it is not the religion of transcendentalism or trans-humanism but the spiritual religion of humanity that is of utmost significance. In this context he writes:

> "The mind of man is to be released from all bonds, allowed freedom and range and opportunity, given all its means of self-training and self-development and organised in the play of its power for the service of humanity. And all this too is not to be held as an abstract or pious sentiment, but given full and practical recognition in the persons of men and practical recognition in the persons of men and nations and mankind."[7]

Thus religion according to Sri Aurobindo, is primarily humanistic and the reference regarding divinity, God and such other theological concepts seem to have been made in a casual manner only to make an appeal to the Indian mind through their age-old cultural pattern of beliefs, attitudes and sentiment. But, in spite of all these suggestions regarding divine plane, the fundamental goal for all religious craving in undoubtedly viewed by Sri Aurobindo as nothing but the welfare of the whole mankind. To him, a perfect *yogin* cannot but sincerely wish well of other fellow beings. A spiritual leader cannot neglect political issues and must concern himself with the issue of all the fellow-creatures. His mind is full of the will to do good to all creatures.

III

Now granting that religion, according to Sri Aurobindo, is not based on any theological dogma and is rooted on a humanistic foundation, the critic is likely to raise further objection about the assimilation of nationalism with this changed version of religion too. Because, any nationalist, in order that he may be loyal to his own position, cannot sacrifice his own national interest and in that sense his primary concern would seem to be safeguarding the political boundary and the interest of his own nation even at the cost of other nationals. So the idea of humanism, however attractive and appealing it may be from a religious and spiritual perspective, cannot convince a nationalist. Nationalism, from this point of view, must make a departure from the tracts of religion, to whatever extent humanistic it may appear to be.

It seems that from Sri Aurobindo's standpoint, this objection is not unanswerable. It is true that the concept of nationalism has a political grounding. But what one is to mark here is that it is not simply exhausted by that political limit. Exclusive emphasis on political ground for the sustenance of the idea of nationalism appears to be considerably weak. The concept of nationalism can very well operate if it, instead of confining itself to mere political limit, passes to something beyond by which people of one nation, besides wishing well of their own national interest, do not think ill of people of other nations. When it is advocated that people of one nation have to allow the people of other nations to have such freedom, right, etc. which they are claiming for themselves, it is not to be construed in terms of prudency but is to be accepted purely on a reasonable basis. And this cannot be made possible unless nationalistic feeling is grounded on humanistic basis.

In this connection reference is often made to another concept : internationalism which is widely found in modern political discussion. Political thinkers maintain that the nationalist, instead of being radical ought to give some concession to other nationals and in this sense his outlook must be international. The feeling of nationalism should not remain as an end in itself but should accommodate a deeper feeling of

internationalism. It is, of course, true that nationalism and internationalism are different. But the difference need not suggest that the two are opposed to each other and are in no way related with each other. A nationalist, in order to be self-consistent, should have an international outlook and an internationalist should not, in turn, overlook the national considerations. The patriotic feeling is to be supplemented by a feeling of universality.

But the problem is : how can it be accomplished? Should it be by mechanically uniting diverse nations under one international organisation? Should a global state be formed so that the national differences of caste, creed etc. will be completely wiped out? Here it may be marked that such a programme of forming a global state is not workable. For, it is based on some misunderstanding of the whole issue. The formation of a global state is itself the formation of a bigger nation and thus the defects of nationality are not remedied but are only arbitrarily suppressed here. While it is admitted that a nationalist must have an international outlook, it is not meant, however, that the difference between the two concepts is to be completely cancelled. The idea of nationalism is not to be annulled but is to be integrated in the idea of internationalism.

In this context Sri Aurobindo's view of nationalism as religion seems to be highly significant. It is already pointed out that for him religion is not some sort of theological orthodoxy; it is rather firmly rooted in a sense of humanistic foundation. Nationalism, in order to be coherent, cannot neglect this sense of humanism. A nation cannot sustain itself if it lacks the humanistic basis. Sri Aurobindo is not opposed to the formation of diverse nations on the basis of political consideration. He is also not after the formation of a world state. For him the idea of a world union of free nations is adequate and sound. The free nations would be united and integrated under one common bond of humanity without losing their identity. It is not bare *combination* but *integration* that is found to have been emphasized by Sri Aurobindo. The different free nations will continue to have their political distinctness. But that distinction need not force the free nations to abolish the

humanistic foundation. In this connection he writes:

> "Our ideal of patriotism proceeds on the basis of love and brotherhood and it looks beyond the unity of the nations and envisages the ultimate unity of makind."[8]

This shows that his nationalism develops into a form of internationalism which has, as its goal, the elevated ideal of human unity. His emphasis on the integration of different nations is quite in keeping with his philosophic message of Integral Advaitism. According to him, any radical version of nationalism isolated from the sense of internationalism and humanism is bound to be at the end self-defeating. Political concept of nationalism is not self sufficient unless it is related with its cognate concepts in different fields.

It seems that by maintaining nationalism as religion Sri Aurobindo is not advocating spiritualistic or supernaturalistic nationalism. Though the term 'spiritualism' has been used by him on more than one occasion yet it should be admitted, in all fairness to his entire thought that he does not thereby suggest a kind of political mysticism. It is, of course, true that he has indicated a close relation between nationalism and religion. But that suggestion again is not based on some sort of visionary idealism, but is rather meant to draw our attention to a significant point that, so far as the concept of nationalism is concerned, the highly pragmatic sense of humanism cannot be overlooked. Sri Aurobindo's religio-political thought seems to be at least on a better rational footing if it is understood in terms of humanism rather than mysticism and esotericism.*

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF MAN AND SOCIETY

Gandhi is not an academic philosopher. He never engages himself with any serious metaphysical controversies that are common to any classical philosopher. He does not claim to have any metaphysical world-view. Nor he is even interested in analysing metaphysical debates as the recent philosophical analyst is eager to carry on. When requested by Prof. Radhakrishnan to write something about his own philosophy for the compilation entitled *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* he only wrote a single page which hardly contains any argument that a professional philosopher might be interested to discuss. Gandhi does not profess to have certain philosophical doctrines or 'isms' whatsoever. In fact, he dislikes to leave any sect like 'Gandhism' after him.[1]

But yet people both inside and outside the country somehow or other are greatly impressed with Gandhi's way of life, his love for fellow men and his regard for truth and non-violence. In the present paper I shall confine myself to a study of Gandhi's attitude towards man in relation to society. However, I shall refrain myself from giving any philosophical evaluation of this attitude.

It appears that Gandhi, all through his life, unfailingly advocates the cause of human dignity and prestige. There are innumerable instances in his life which can revel how sincerely he stands for the cause of his fellow men. His resolute agitation against the colour prejudice of the people and the government of South Africa, his appeal for the upliftment of

the backward class people within the Hindu sect, his unhesitating service to the British soldiers during the war and his relentless attempt for restoring peace among the different communities are some of the important measures which rank him as one of the first rate humanists of the world. With least selfish motive he fought for the cause of the Indian minority residing in South Africa. No doubt he established himself on the public platform after such kind of activities there. But this is quite natural for anybody who devotes Himself to selfless service and gets the reward of popularity. Despite his incorrigible idealism he proposed an experiment for society which he himself first undertook. No so much for the sake of the Hindu religion as for the sake of humanity he pleaded for the betterment of the *Harijans*. He boldly appealed to the entire Hindu world by commenting : "Nothing can be accepted as the word of God which cannot be tested by reason, or be capable of being spiritually experienced.'[2] Wherever humanity suffers either in the temple or in the war field or in civil life, everywhere Gandhi moved unhesitatingly to render his service. Mr. Brailsford rightly says : 'India honours Gandhiji today chiefly because he led the fight for independence. Humanity owns him an even heavier debt because he opened the road of the untouchables to freedom.'[3]

So far as the status of the human individual in society is concerned, Gandhi emphasised the development of the individual from a rigorous moral point of view. He believed in the basic goodness of man. Though the individual is the compound of both good and evil it is desirable, says Gandhi, to hold to the good and to reject the evil. And this practice of retaining everything good and avoiding everything bad is justified not from a mystical but from a rational point of view. He says : 'I have no desire to carry a single soul with me, if I cannot appeal to his or her reason'.[4]

Critics often interpret Gandhi to be a mystic. It is because very often Gandhi justifies his action by referring to some inner voice and sometimes to the sixth sense. The moral ideal of pursuing truth unfailingly is often quoted as visionary idealism and is not based on reality. But 'the aims of mysticism,' says Underhill, 'are wholly transcendental and

spiritual. It is in no way concerned with adding to, exploring, rearranging or improving anything in the visible universe".[5] As hinted earlier, Gandhi keeps nothing secret. He has no secret methods.[6] He himself practised the moral ideal which he considered appropriate for the realisation of truth. Moreover, pursuing truth is not here due to any hidden motive of attaining divine bliss but for the well-being of the entire humanity. The ideal of truth was pursued only when Gandhi was rationally convinced that to speak truth was good. Of course it may be a point of discussion as to how far Gandhi's viewpoint on this topic is rational. But that is another matter.

Even though Gandhi placed more reliance on "individuals than on groups"[7] he believed that duties to self, family, country and the world were all very important. He says : "We must die that the family may live, the family must die that the country may live, and the country must die that the world may live".[8] The point is, Gandhi is not interested in the betterment of some. His well-known concept of *Sarvodaya* stands for 'welfare of all'. In this sense he differs from Mill who holds the doctrine of 'the greatest good of the greatest number'. He disapproves of the idea that "in order to achieve the supposed good of 51 per cent, the interest of 49 per cent should be sacrificed".[9] He hated machinery and modern industrialisation as they place the control of production in the hands of the few. Whatever cannot be shared by the masses is a tabu to him.[10] If by some means the machinery is run by the nation, probably, then he would not object. Industry, if it brings good to all, then there is nothing wrong in carrying it. In fact, Gandhi once approved of the use of electricity that is nationalised. This almost sounds like a favourable attitude towards socialism. His appeal for cottage industry as against the heavy mechanical industry was only in the context of the then India. That means the *Khadi* movement and the like were merely temporary measures and did not constitute one absolute method for attaining better standards of society. The aim was rather the attainment of perfect socialism which could ensure the betterment of all.

In this context it would not be out of place to refer to

Marx who also advocates classless society that brings equal opportunity to all. As Gandhi was keen to remove the practice of untouchability, so Marx was keenly interested in removing the miseries of the downtrodden people. But Marx did not hesitate to adopt violent means for bringing about change while Gandhi only clung to the non-violent procedure.

To some, the socialistic reformative ideas of Gandhi seem to suffer from some internal inconsistencies. On the one hand, he advocates nationalisation of electricity and on the other he believes 'in the trusteeship of the owning class, whether land-owners or capitalists'. This trusteeship upsets the programme of classless society and with it the basic idea of *Sarvodaya* too. While approving of the printing press and the sewing machine he disapproves of the locomotives. There are other similar instances.

But we think, the belief in trusteeship is not a permanent but a temporary measure just for introducing Socialism into the society (with particular reference to India) where the masses have not adapted themselves to any change whatsoever. The advocacy of trusteeship is not to favour Feudalism as some have anticipated[11] but rather to introduce Socialism by slow as well as steady procedures. His introduction of *khadi* and cottage industry is meant just to discourage foreign goods and diminish the influence of foreign markets. He persuaded Indians to be self-sufficient, to depend least on foreign goods, to go back to agriculture and not to be attracted to city industries. By all these measures the boycott of the English market can be actualised and the spirit of nationality can be well instilled into the Indian mind which might ensure the achievement of political independence. Gandhi was always eager to infuse the spirit of nationalism into the minds of the Indian people. It is, however, needless to say that the printing press is one of the surest means through which the spirit of nationalism can be well propagated and can reach the masses rapidly. This idea of inculcating the spirit of nationalism, again, is not at all advocated by Gandhi from any limited point of view of attaining political or territorial freedom but strictly for a humanitarian goal of reaching freedom from all kinds of injustice and inequality. Nationalism, for Gandhi, is

not essentially a political concept but is rather based on the humanistic feeling. It is only from the point of view of humanitarianism, that Gandhi warmly lent support to the idea of all nations being free and self-dependent. The disapproval of locomotive is, perhaps, mainly due to the fact that it did not prove adequately helpful in diminishing the unequal standard of the then masses of the country. If this observation is correct, then one can surely say that Gandhi was not absolutely opposed to industry or city civilisation or to the introduction of modern equipments for agriculture. The apparent inconsistency which is found in his different plans and objectives can thus be avoided.

Let me conclude, then, with Gandhi's attitude towards man which is absolutely humanistic. There can be no argument against this. His humanism is not personalistic but truly international in spirit which overcomes all barriers of caste, religion and culture. It is not based on any spiritual or mystical ideology but has a firm rational footing. Man is asked to be disciplined, moral and honest not at the cost of society, not by withdrawing himself from society but by striving always for the well-being of society. Humanism is linked up with the social concept of *Sarvodaya*. The adoption of truth and non-violence is highly effective and persuasive in bringing about change in the order of society for reaching the goal. Though there may be further discussions about the rational basis of such procedures like truth and non-violence, yet there can be no doubt that in appropriate situations and favourable circumstances such means are most needed. In the modern world of chaos and confusion Gandhi's proposal for these means and procedures, which ensure peace on many occasions, will also continue to prove fruitful for similar situations in future. There is no doubt about it.*

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